

**A STUDY OF EXPOSITORY PREACHING IN THE CONTEXT OF THE
KOREAN CHURCH: TOWARD AN EFFECTIVE THEOLOGY
OF EXPOSITORY PREACHING**

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**by
Yeo-am Yoon
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Yeo-am Yoon

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Faculty Committee

J. Irwin Fetter

Chan-Hie Kim

April 14, 1993

Date

Ally J. Moore

Dean

ABSTRACT

A Study of Expository Preaching in the Context of the Korean Church: Toward an Effective Theology of Expository Preaching

by

Yeo-am Yoon

From the early period of the 1960s, the Korean church began to be polarized into two rival camps: the conservative evangelical and the liberal ecumenical. Holding fast to the doctrine of separation of church and state, the conservative evangelical people have emphasized personal salvation alone, and have withdrawn increasingly into the shell of revivalism. On the other hand, the liberal ecumenical people have been involved in socio-political issues. They seemed to have come to the conclusion that changing people without changing social structure is a waste of time. Consequently, they have neglected personal salvation in their preaching.

The preachers of the conservative side have laid their emphasis upon biblicalism, fundamentalism, evangelicalism, and personal salvation, whereas those of the liberal ecumenical group have stressed liberation, ecumenism, syncretism, and social redemption.

Therefore, this project attempts to discover the possibility of combining evangelical preaching with liberal preaching in the Korean church. Expository preaching is presented as an effective model which creatively synthesizes evangelical preaching and liberating preaching. Expository

preaching attempts to bind together the Word of God and the Incarnate Word. In other words, it insists that a preacher ought to be not only the proclaimer but also the doer of what he/she proclaimed.

The first half of this project is a historical survey which examines examples of preaching. The survey is divided into four periods in order to analyze the special style and forms of preaching in each period.

The second half of this project is a theology of expository preaching. The theological contexts for this project are the theology of the Word of God as presented by Martin Luther and Karl Barth, and the political theology of Jurgen Moltmann as demonstrated in his hermeneutics of the gospel. This project describes the preacher as a priest who has the task of a mediator between God and human beings. This project concludes with some recommendations and a proposal for the future direction in the Korean pulpit.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Problem Addressed by Project

This project deals with the problems which develop as a result of the lack of expository preaching in the historical context of the Korean church.

Importance of the Problem

According to DeWitte T. Holland, the significance of preaching is that "where the Word is preached, God is present to do his mighty works."¹ Preaching is the path between the Word of God and the human response which faith should or usually will take. A unique characteristic of preaching is that of both the speaking and the hearing of the Word of God. God calls the preacher to proclaim God's Word, and the congregation to hear God's Word. Therefore, the purpose of preaching is to help listeners to find out the true interpretation of life in the Bible.²

However, there is a crisis in the preaching of the Korean church, because today's preaching does not change people.³ If it cannot make a difference to be a Christian, then why go

¹ DeWitte T. Holland, The Preaching Tradition: A Brief History (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980), 10.

² Harold E. Knott, How to Prepare an Expository Sermon (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing, 1930), 11.

³ Clyde H. Reid, The Empty Pulpit: A Study in a Preaching as Communication (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), 30.

to church? The reason for this is that most preachers do not want to honor the Bible as the primary source of their preaching. They are not preaching through the Bible but about the Bible. If the Bible, as God's Word, is not the source of preaching, one can never be a preacher. The Bible is the only communication of God and the only truth for human beings. Therefore, a preacher does not have any reason for being without the Bible. Preaching is God talk.

While the content of conventional preaching has laid its emphasis on the Bible itself, conversion, faith in God, Christian ethics; modern preaching has been criticized as non-biblical and shamanistic. Furthermore, the major problem in the Korean pulpit is the absence of a theology of preaching. Thus modern preaching has been criticized as too emotional, manipulative of people, and unrelated to the purpose of the Bible. Therefore, this project tries to rediscover the effective way of communicating the Bible in preaching. Our preaching should rely upon the Bible. For Christians, the Bible is the supreme rule of faith and practice. Therefore, expository preaching must have a pride of place, an appropriate placement and source.

Thesis

This project undertakes to show that the division in the Korean church between evangelicals and social liberals can be overcome through expository preaching.

Definitions of Major Terms

Evangelical Preaching

Evangelical means different things to different people. According to Richard Armstrong, evangelical means "belonging to, contained in, agreeable to, in the spirit of the gospel or the teaching of the New Testament."⁴ Some regard an evangelical as a person who emphasizes the importance of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. To others, evangelicals are the comfortable users of traditional God language and Biblical terms such as sin, repentance, judgment, salvation, eternal life, etc. Therefore, the notion of evangelical preaching can be defined in this project, as follows: that form of pulpit address in which the gospel is proclaimed, but the focus of the message is upon personal salvation and individual work. In this respect, some characteristics of evangelical preaching may be summarized as: (1) a literal interpretation of the Bible; (2) a Christ-centered structure; (3) an emphasis on personal salvation; (4) an emphasis on individual ethics and private deeds; (5) frequent use of Biblical terms such as sin, redemption, judgment, eternal life; and (6) emphasis on human beings' sinful state and the grace of God as the motives for preaching.

⁴ Richard S. Armstrong, Service Evangelism (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1979), 56.

Liberating Preaching

Liberating is that form of sermon which is motivated by those who are involved in the various liberation movements today.⁵ Its emphasis is on liberation from all kinds of oppressive structures or powers, such as social, political, economic, even religious.⁶ Liberating preaching is delivered from the perspective of the traditionally powerless as they experience the empowerment of the gospel. This is meant not only in an inner sense, but also in the sense that it compels and enables them to strive for justice. In a broad sense, liberating preaching is that form of pulpit address and political interpretation of the gospel delivered by the proponents of current political theologies, such as liberation theology.

Topical Preaching

Topical preaching is used in this project as the type of preaching whose form comes out of the words and ideas from the subject. It is built around a subject-idea taken from the Bible or outside of the Bible. In topical preaching the subject dominates everything that follows, just as in textual preaching the Bible passage governs everything that comes afterward. Topical preaching may include ethical preaching, doctrinal preaching, historical preaching, biographical

⁵ Justo L. Gonzales and Catherine G. Gonzales, Liberation Preaching: The Pulpit and the Oppressed (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980), 95.

⁶ Gonzales and Gonzales, 13.

preaching, and evangelistic preaching. However, life-situation preaching is identified with topical preaching.⁷

Textual Preaching

Textual preaching is used, in this project, as the type of preaching whose structure corresponds with the order of the parts in the text. Its subject must come from the text itself. Whether or not the structure calls attention to itself, it has as much to do with the message as the bony framework has to do with human being's skeletal body. This kind of preaching fixes attention on one part of the scripture. It is one based on several verses from the Bible, with the main theme and the major preaching divisions coming from the text.

Expository Preaching

Expository preaching means, in this project, a preaching that grows out of a Bible passage which is longer than in textual preaching. Theoretically, such preaching differs from textual preaching chiefly in the length of the scripture units; practically, the two terms often overlap. It deals with them as they were written, with the book as the larger unit and paragraph as the smaller one. The preacher must try to show the meaning of the Bible.

Expository preaching is

based on a Bible passage, usually longer than three or four verses; the theme, the thesis and the major

⁷ Ilion T. Jones, Principles and Practice of Preaching (New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), 40-41.

and minor divisions coming from the passage; the whole preaching being an honest attempt to unfold the true grammatical-historical-contextual meaning of the passage, making it relevant to today's life by proper organization, argument, illustration, application and appeal.⁸

It is not a running commentary from word to word and verse to verse without unity, outline, and persuasive drive.

However, in expository preaching all main points and subpoints of a sermon are derived directly from the chosen text. This does not rule out explanation, illustration and application from other sources, but the basic ideas come from the chosen text. It is the method entirely based on the given text in the Bible either long or short. The subject, main points and subpoints of expository preaching come from the text. The text controls the whole preaching.

Work Previously Done in the Field

In his book Expository Preaching for Today, Andrew Blackwood asserted that the goals of expository preaching are (1) rediscovering the Bible, (2) growing in Christian knowledge, (3) using the Bible practically, (4) growing in Christian grace, (5) applying Biblical ethics, and (6) deepening Christian experience.⁹

Preaching is more than reading, and more than just putting the Biblical text into up-to-date language. Preaching

⁸ Faris D. Whitesell, Power in Expository Preaching (Westwood, NJ: Revell, 1963), vi-vii.

⁹ Andrew W. Blackwood, Expository Preaching for Today (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1953), 27-43.

is a way of overcoming the barrier of time by bringing past Biblical events into the present situation. This means that expository preaching includes exegesis and exposition. Therefore, what God is saying to today's particular congregation, at this particular time, is very important for preaching. The Word of God must be addressed to real people. The preacher is to be a bridge, a mediator between God's Word addressed to human beings, together with a human being's response to that Word. This means that a preacher should have some knowledge of the nature and needs of the people to whom he/she will be speaking. A preacher is to make the Word come alive. With this point of view, Andrew W. Blackwood ignored exegetical works in his book, Expository Preaching for Today.

Most preaching today in the Korean church is irrelevant. The problem is that today's preaching does not reach the needs of modern human beings. People have difficulty seeing any direct connection between the words of the preacher and this world in which they live, in order to make their decisions. Furthermore, there are many preachers who preach without the Bible.

Actually, there are two rival camps in the Korean church: the conservative evangelical and the liberal ecumenical. The conservative evangelical people have emphasized personal salvation alone, and have increasingly withdrawn into the shell of revivalism. On the other hand, the liberal ecumenical people have been involved in socio-political

issues. They have neglected personal salvation in their preaching. Therefore, there is a big tension between the evangelical church and the liberal church.

However, expository preaching is presented as an effective model which creatively synthesizes evangelical preaching and liberating preaching. An expository preacher must preach personal salvation and social salvation because expository preaching has two goals: understanding the Bible, and application of the Bible to daily life.

Scope and Limitation of the Project

This project is responsible for comparing and analyzing three major models of preaching (topical preaching, textual preaching, and expository preaching) as they affect the Korean church. The question this project will finally attempt to answer is: Which model can be useful for the Korean church?

This project does not discuss in depth all fields of preaching. This project is limited to the Korean church, in Korea, and models of its preaching. In addition, this project does not develop new models of preaching.

Procedure for Integration

This project seeks to bring into the Korean church the ways the church can maximize effective use of the preaching model. The method followed in this study primarily involves library research, including articles, books, research findings, etc.

CHAPTER 2

Historical Context of Preaching in Korean Church History

This chapter aims at presenting a brief history of preaching, in the Korean church, and finding examples of earlier preaching models. Some preaching of missionaries and native preachers, from early times, are dealt with in order to demonstrate how they have proclaimed the gospel within the concrete history of Korea. This history of Korea has been to fulfill God's holistic vision, on the one hand, and to meet the needs of people, on the other hand. The whole period is divided into four parts.

The Early Korean Church and Preaching (1885-1910)

In a sense, Spencer Palmer is quite right in his description of the situation of early Christianity in Korea.

The dichotomy of literal Biblicalism and the social gospel, a mark of Protestant mission in China (and for that matter, Japan), never found place in Korea. Under the impetus of a program directed by American missionaries of "Puritan zeal and Wesleyan fervor," fundamentalism held sway in the Peninsula.... Higher criticism and liberal theology were deemed as dangerous heresies.¹

Protestantism in Korea began when the first two missionaries, the Reverend Henry G. Appenzeller (a Methodist) and the Reverend Horace G. Underwood (a Presbyterian), arrived in Inchon on Easter morning, April 5, 1885. Unfortunately,

¹ Spencer J. Palmer, Korea and Christianity: The Problem of Identification with Tradition (Seoul: Hollym Corp., 1967), 26.

there are no surviving manuscripts of sermons by those two missionaries from this early period. It seems that in this early period, these missionaries were compelled to start a kind of teaching ministry, rather than preaching, because of Korea's anti-Western mood. This fact is evident in a letter by Underwood dated April 1885, soon after his arrival. The receiver of this letter was L. H. Foote, the American consul of Korea at that time.

We came here to start educational work and study the Korean language. As a student of Korean language or an educator, is it possible for us to start our work in Seoul under the protection of the American flag? What do you think if we now open educational work rather than missionary work?²

Nevertheless, we can see the form and content of preaching in this period, through fragments of their sermons, missionary reports, and records of revival movements of that time, as well as later manuscripts of their sermons.

In general, the missionaries seemed to have a preference for topical preaching while early Korean preachers had a preference for textual preaching.³ But it is needless to say that both of them laid their emphasis on the repentance of sins, conversion to Christ, salvation by faith, and trust in God. W. N. Blair, a Presbyterian missionary who worked for forty years in the northern part of Korea, gives the following

² See Kyung-Bae Min, The Church History of Korea (Seoul: Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1972), 194.

³ Sung-Koo Chung, "A Critical Evaluation on Sermons of Early Churches in Korea," Ministry Monthly, April 1984: 92.

testimony of what happened at the annual Presbyterian and Methodist Bible Conference in January 1907, at the Pyung Yang Central Church with more than fifteen hundred people present. He said:

Saturday night, I preached on I Corinthians 12:27, 'Now Ye are the body of Christ and severally members thereof;' endeavoring to show that discord in the Church was like sickness in the body, 'and whether one member suffereth, all the member suffer with it;' striving to show how hate in a brother's heart injured not only the whole Church, but brought pain to Christ, the Church's head. Shortly after going to Korea, I had an accident while hunting and shot off the end of one of my fingers. All the Koreans knew of this. Holding up my hand, I told how my head ached and my whole body suffered with the injured finger. the idea seemed to go home to them. After the sermon, many testified to a new realization of what sin was. A number, with sorrow, confessed lack of love for others.⁴

Another missionary, the Reverend Graham Lee, who preached a short sermon at that meeting, describes the situation like this:

Man after man would rise, confess his sin, break down and weep, and then throw himself on the floor and beat the floor with his fists in a perfect agony of conviction.... Sometimes, after a confession, the whole audience would break out into audible prayer and the effect of that audience of hundreds of man praying together in audible prayer was something indescribable. Again, after another confession, they would break out into uncontrollable weeping and we would all weep together. We couldn't help it. And so the meeting went on until 2 AM, with confession and weeping and praying.⁵

⁴ Quoted in Allen D. Clark, A History of the Church in Korea (Seoul: Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1971), 160.

⁵ Clark, 162.

It appears that the preaching by these missionaries was very simple and emotional. But it was very powerful in its effect. Of course, those two accounts describe one of the scenes in the Great Revival of 1907, a spiritual movement which swept the country and inspired the entire Christian movement as a whole.

One of the problems of this period was created by the Japanese political invasion. Since Japanese political pressure was being felt throughout the nation in 1905, many young Korean leaders emigrated to the United States of America, or other countries, in order to continue their political resistance against Japanese rule from abroad.

For this reason, the Great Revival of 1907 has been often misinterpreted; that is, some might hold that the people who had not escaped from Japanese political pressure found spiritual shelter in the church, on the one hand; and others who had demanded political opposition against Japanese rule took advantage of the church to establish a center for their resistance, on the other hand.⁶

No matter how the Great Revival of 1907 may be interpreted, the significance of this spiritual movement cannot be neglected. This revival was not only a special empowerment by the Spirit of God to meet the needs of a critical time in both the nation and the church, it was also the first opportunity to show how God works among the people

⁶ Min, 217.

through preaching.

Furthermore, this great awakening of 1907 brought an enthusiasm for winning souls to Christ. The Southern Methodist Mission adopted the slogan, "Two hundred thousand souls for Christ," in its annual meeting in September 1909. Later, the General Council met in Seoul and decided to set a bold slogan, "A million souls for Christ." It was the first nation-wide movement by the Korean church. All kinds of Christians participated in this movement in order to make the slogan a reality.

The Reverend Sun-Joo Kil, one of the first of seven pastors to graduate from the Pyung Yang Presbyterian Seminary in 1907, is an excellent example of the preachers of this period. The Reverend Kil is very famous because the Great Revival of 1907 started in his church and his preaching had much to do with that movement.

Sermon Title: "Being Saved in a Moment, Five Factors for Salvation" (Luke 23:36-43)

One of the criminals who was crucified with Jesus was also saved in a moment. Some people say that the robber was saved easily.... But I want to ask them whether they could be saved easily when placed in such a difficult situation as the robber. The robber had faith to be saved. What faith? I believe that there are five factors in salvation.

- 1) Repentance
- 2) Faith in Christ
- 3) Testimony
- 4) Hope for the coming Kingdom of God
- 5) Supplication(outlined).

⁷ Sun-Joo Kil as quoted in Yo-Sup Um, ed., Hundred Years of Great Preaching in the Korean Church (Seoul: Kidok-Kyomun Sa, 1978), 1: 57-60.

Another example is given by The Reverend Suk-Ji Han, one of the first seven pastors in the Presbyterian church:

Sermon Title: "Jesus Who Receives Sinners" (Luke 15:2)

In the Bible we see some strange words. For example, Luke 23:35 says that Jesus saved others. These words were uttered by Jesus' enemies in order to scoff at him, but the words were correct in themselves.... Jesus came into the world to receive sinners that they may be saved and become faithful men....

- 1) Whom does Jesus receive?
- 2) Jesus has the authority to accept sinners
- 3) But the acceptance is conditioned by the one who repents.⁸

As mentioned above, the early manuscripts of the first two missionaries have not been found, but their later ones have been kept. The following sermon was delivered by The Reverend Appenzeller:

Sermon Title: "The Purpose of Human Life" (1 John 2:17)

It was night when I returned to this country from America.... The next morning I saw first Buk Han Mountain. This mountain even today has not changed at all in seventeen years. However, the people and things on that mountain have so greatly changed that I could hardly discern them. In the Bible it is written that all the people and things will change, but he who does the will of God abides forever.... I will tell you about unchangeable facts in the following three articles.

- 1) The gift of God does not change.
- 2) Grant or permission from God does not change.
- 3) The Reward from God does not change.⁹

⁸ Suk-Ji Han as quoted in Um, 1: 128-32.

⁹ Henry G. Appenzeller as quoted in Um, 1: 538-43.

It is evident that the content of preaching during this period has two characteristics. First, most of the early preachers did not borrow any thoughts or ideas from Confucianism, Buddhism, or other native Korean religions. They only proclaimed the gospel in its pure form in terms of Biblicalism. The first preaching was naive, simple, and emotional. Second, the emphasis of preaching was laid mainly on personal salvation: that is conversion, repentance, salvation by faith, love in Christ, and so on. In other words, it was Bible-centered and evangelical in a narrow sense.

The Church under the Reign of Japan
and Preaching (1910-1945)

The thirty six years between 1910 and 1945 represent an extremely turbulent period in the history of both the church and the state. The church, in this period, was characterized by three remarkable movements: (1) the political or nationalistic movement (1910-1919), (2) the social or cultural movement (1920-1930), and (3) the mystical or sectarian movement (1931-1945).

On August 22, 1910, Japan formally annexed Korea as a colony of the Japanese Empire. From the early 1900s the missionaries in Korea had consistently endeavored to keep the church from being involved in any political movements. The Presbyterian missionaries had already declared their policy

of "separation of church and state" in September 1901.¹⁰ Even though the Reverend Byung-Hyun Choe, a Methodist pastor, had insisted on the inseparability of the church and the state in 1906,¹¹ most of the leaders of the Korean church had been silent about the political neutrality of the missionaries until 1910.

It was inevitable that most Christian leaders would rise in opposition to Japanese colonialism and to other Korean leaders who supported the separation doctrine. It was just at this point that the dichotomy between personal salvation and social redemption first came into existence in the history of the Korean church.

The strongest voice for the independent movement came from the Methodist, Presbyterian, Holiness and Baptist groups. Most of the leaders of these groups became involved in preaching about political issues. Without overlooking the basic ideas of the gospel, they attempted to inspire a nationalistic spirit or patriotism in the hearts of people, and applied the Word of God to the trials, sufferings, and frustration of the people. The Reverend Kyung-Hee Han, a Presbyterian preacher, shows a good example of this kind of preaching, in a sermon entitled, "The Decision of Daniel" (Dan. 1:18): "Daniel decided to demonstrate a Jewish native

¹⁰ Man-Yeol Lee, State Power and the Christian Church (Seoul: Min-Jung Sa, 1982), 139.

¹¹ Lee, 142.

spirit..., and to prove himself to be an honorable Jew.... I wish you to be a second Daniel by making a Decision like Daniel"¹²

However, the majority of the nationalistic sermons had to be delivered in an indirect or parabolic way because the Japanese secret police monitored the Korean pulpits after the annexation of 1910. For example, Japanese police sought to arrest a pastor because of his sermon entitled "Kingdom of God" since Japan believed that there could be no kingdom but Japan. The Japanese government began to forbid pastors to preach about "fighting against sins," which could be interpreted as a parabolic way of preaching about resisting the Japanese government.¹³

On March 1, 1919, all the people in Korea participated in the "Independent Movement," in protest against the political pressure of Japanese imperialism. It was one of the most well-planned movements in modern times, in spite of the all-seeing inspection of the Japanese police system. Efforts were made by the Japanese government to link some of the missionaries as instigators, but no missionary had the slightest warning that such a plan was in preparation. More than a half a million Koreans, from all ranks of society,

¹² Um, 1: 183-86.

¹³ Clark, 187.

carried out a peaceful and non-violent demonstration.¹⁴ It is clear that Christians played a significant role in the Independent Movement of 1919. Out of thirty three Korean signers of the Declaration of Independence, fifteen were Christians. Many Christians were arrested for their participation in this movement: Presbyterians 2,486, Methodists 560, Congregationalists 7, other Protestants 320, Catholics 55, Buddhists 220, Confucianists 346, Chondokyos 2,283.¹⁵

It was noteworthy that a few of the thirty-three signers of the Independent Declaration were very conservative Christian preachers. The Reverend Sun-Joo Kil was a good example of these preachers. For his participation in the movement, he had to spend three years in prison. But he took advantage of time in prison as an opportunity both to study the Bible and to preach the Gospel to the unsaved. It was reported that many converts were made by his preaching in jail.¹⁶

After the Independent Movement of 1919, Christians schools had to be closed and church buildings destroyed. The suffering of the church under Japanese colonial government became more severe up until the liberation of 1945. Even

¹⁴ At this time, Ghandi was starting his non-violent movement in India.

¹⁵ Palmer, 65; Lee, 163.

¹⁶ Clark, 427.

though the Independent Movement did not bring freedom to Korea, it was not an entire failure. The Koreans regained their self-respect and became more friendly with the Christian church.

On the other hand, the Japanese military government was changed to a civilian government, although there was no difference in its oppressive policy. The activities of the missionaries and Christian leaders were regulated under the veil of "cultural policy," which was created to reduce discrimination against Koreans according to the Japanese civil government. From the Christian point of view, this policy was nothing but satanic.¹⁷ At first, the attitude of higher officials towards the church seemed to be friendly. More respect seemed to be shown towards local customs. However, this cultural policy ultimately attempted to swallow up the Korean culture and tradition, by forbidding the use of the native tongue and by forcing Koreans to change their own names to Japanese names.

At this time, preaching played an important role in Korea. Reading and preaching the Bible in the Korean language was not prohibited, although content was restricted.¹⁸ In general, however, as the church gained freedom, it began to decline in membership and power within the society. Some

¹⁷ Clark, 430.

¹⁸ The civil government of Japan did not permit the majority of the Bible to be read and preached except the four gospels.

historians insist that the church forgot the nationalist mission by devoting itself to social movement.¹⁹ According to them, this caused the decrease in numbers and power of the church. But, most of the sermons of this period were not social, but doctrinal, spiritual, and moral in character. Furthermore, not a few of the preachers endeavored to inspire a nationalistic spirit, though implicitly, and to give courage to the depressed people in their situations. Sermons of the time include:

"The Balance of God" (Proverbs 21:2), by the Reverend Shin-choon Kang:

- 1) The balance of God is able to measure all of the world.
- 2) The balance of God measures the state and nation.
- 3) The balance of God measures the church and Christians.²⁰

"Seek First His Kingdom and His Righteousness" (Matthew 6:33-34), by the Reverend Hyung-Kyoo Park:

- 1) Righteousness is the supreme standard of human life.
- 2) Righteousness is the golden rule for both the state and the social life.
- 3) Righteousness is a victor in the end.²¹

"The Long Range War of Christianity" (Romans 12:21), by the Reverend Dong-Wook Lee.

- 1) We must fight against difficulties.
- 2) We must fight against evil.²²
- 3) We must fight against sins.

Since the latter half of the 1920s, a few preachers have felt

¹⁹ Gon-Ho Song, Nationalism and Christianity (Seoul: Min-Jung Sa, 1981), 88.

²⁰ Um, 2: 35-39.

²¹ Um, 2: 201-06.

²² Um, 2: 250-53.

the necessity of redefining the notion of preaching. The prefaces of sermon collections published by some of the prominent preachers, at that time, discuss the question:

A talk that is motivated by a preacher's own mind and is composed of various thoughts or theories cannot be called preaching. That kind of preaching is artificial, but not divine. It should be called a scholarly lecture rather than preaching. Although it may be applauded greatly, it cannot be blessed by God.²³

In the preface of The Pulpit of Korea, published on December 31, 1928, the Reverend Choon-Bae Kim defined the notion of preaching as follows:

Preaching is an address to proclaim the love and truth of an eternal-infallible God, and a voice from the conscience to warn against kinds of human sins and against the trends of thought of the times as well.²⁴

This illustrates two important facts of preaching during that time. First, in a certain sense, Korean preaching began to develop from this period. Second, it implies that the tension between evangelical preaching and liberating preaching was already present in that time.

The Church in Freedom and Division, and Preaching (1945-1960)

By the grace of God, Koreans were liberated from Japanese imperialism on August 15, 1945, after Japan's defeat in World War II. However, the joy of liberation was only temporary

²³ Um, 2: 494.

²⁴ Choon-Bae Kim, The Pulpit of Korea (Seoul: Kidokkyo-Syehoe, 1928), 2.

since the decision of the Yalta Conference resulted in a national division at the Thirty-Eighth Parallel. The purpose of setting the Thirty-Eighth Parallel was, at first, to put an end to Japanese political Rule and to secure peace in Korea. It was thus decided that Russia would cast out the Japanese government from the northern part of Korea, that is, above the Thirty-Eighth Parallel, and that the other Allied powers would occupy the southern part of the country.

This decision proved to be tragic not only for the nation, but also for the church, because it allowed the Russian Communists to establish a government over the northern part of Korea. As a result, the Communist government of North Korea instigated the Korean War June 25, 1950. Since then, the Thirty-Eighth Parallel has been a symbol of the tragedy of the nation and of the church, as well. However, the fifteen years between 1945 and 1960 were a significant period for the church in Korea in various respects.

First, the church recorded a "tremendous growth" during this period.²⁵ As church growth statistics show, the Christian population was about 370,000 in 1940. But it increased to 1,190,000 in 1960. Roy E. Shearer points out that this rapid growth was due to the Korean War of 1950 and American aid to Korea after the Civil War.²⁶ But it is only

²⁵ Roy E. Shearer, Wildfire: Church Growth in Korea (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1966), 212.

²⁶ Shearer, 211.

partially true. Other factors, related to preaching which caused the growth should not be overlooked.

For one thing, the Liberation of 1945 gave the church absolute freedom of preaching, so that the preachers, who had been inspected under the Japanese secret police system, had a golden opportunity to proclaim the gospel of Christ. They sowed much during this period, and subsequently they harvested much. This is evident in the sermons delivered in the first few years after Liberation.

For another thing, splits among the churches, though shameful, were an indirect cause of this growth. When a church divided into two congregations, each developed into two churches of similar size and began to evangelize in different parts of their community.²⁷

Professor Kyung-Bae Min, a prominent church historian, points out that the splits within the churches had already begun in the first year of the Liberation.²⁸ The first split came in the Presbyterian church. The main reason of the division lay in the shrine issue. Soon after the Liberation, Presbyterian leaders were released from prison and met to discuss the restoration of the church. The focus of the discussion concentrated on judgement against those who had gone out to the shrine and bowed before it. The demand was voiced that "they should stay out of their pulpits for at

²⁷ Shearer, 215.

²⁸ Min, 341.

least two months and then make a public confession."²⁹ A schism was inevitable because those who bowed before the shrine did not accept any discipline and insisted, instead, that the pains they endured to preserve the churches were just as great as the suffering of the imprisoned Christians.

For this reason, the leaders who demanded severe discipline separated from the Presbyterian body in 1951 and set up their own assembly: The Koryu Presbyterian Church in Korea. This denomination has remained the most conservative, critical, and anti-ecumenical until today.

Another split occurred in the Presbyterian church in 1954. This time the main reason for the split had to do with a theological issue very important to the study of all preaching history within Korea. In 1947, Jae-Joon Kim, professor of Chosun Theological Seminary, which belonged to the Presbyterian church, criticized conservative theology and declared that he would utilize historical criticism and other contemporary theologies. Professor Kim's methodology shocked and antagonized all the churches in Korea.³⁰ The first theological attack was made by Dr. Hyung-Nong Park, a representative of Korean fundamentalism, who had studied under J. G. Machen in the United States. Dr Park insisted that historical criticism in theology was sufficient to destroy the authority of the Bible, unless the church excluded that

²⁹ Clark, 234.

³⁰ Min, 346.

methodology.³¹

In the end Professor Kim decided to depart from the Presbyterian church. He and his followers started the Christ Presbyterian Church in Korea. This denomination has been the most radical and active in socio-political involvement, standing in the forefront of all contemporary theologies: Liberation theology, revolution theology, black theology, and political theology.

In 1959, a third major split began around the Presbyterian church and grew into the pro-ecumenical and anti-ecumenical bodies of the church. In short, the Presbyterian church was divided in four ways. Meanwhile, the Methodist church faced its first schism in 1954 due to administrative and constitutional matters,³² but reunited in 1959.

What, then, was the impact of such splits upon the church in its relation to preaching? A closer examination of the sermons during this period reveal the following:

(1) Preaching began to lose its power over Christian life. It was like an empty voice in the air.

(2) Some preachers tended to take advantage of the pulpit as a place for their theological and political debates.

(3) The number of preachers who chose topical preaching in preference to textual preaching increased. Preachers of the conservative churches continued textual preaching, whereas

³¹ Min, 349-50.

³² Min, 353.

preachers of liberal or ecumenical persuasion tended to favor the topical style.³³

Now let us turn to a third aspect of this period in its relation to preaching. The Liberation of 1945 was particularly joyful for the Christians. But as already noted above, the situation above the Thirty-Eighth Parallel proved to be difficult as the Soviet Communist government consolidated its control over those provinces. It was inevitable that a sharp conflict between the church and Communist ideology should emerge during this formative time.

As Professor Kyung-Jae Kim points out, it is noteworthy that the church in North Korea, though adhering to the doctrine of separation between church and state, was so deeply involved in the society that it organized the Christian Social Democratic Party in September 1945 under the leadership of Reverend Ha-Yung Yoon and Reverend Kyung-Chick Han.³⁴ At the first political party composed of Christians in North Korea, it was organized "to stand for democracy and the reformation of society in line with Christian ideals."³⁵

This Christian social action gave the Communist authorities much cause to oppress the Christians. The Communists "led a mob into the church, wrecked the pulpit, and dragged the pastor around the city on an ox-cart, with

³³ Min, 348.

³⁴ Song, 106.

³⁵ Song, 106.

insulting placards hung about his neck."³⁶ Numerous Christians were arrested to be killed, or fled for their lives to South Korea. In spite of the dehumanizing oppression of the Communist government, Christians went ahead with their plans to try to save the people from the hands of the Communists. Even though the first political party of the church in North Korea was hindered and scattered by the communist military forces, it is worthy to be remembered as an image of the church standing with the people, the oppressed, and the deprived. Meanwhile, the church in South Korea enjoyed perfect freedom of faith under the leadership of the first president, Syngman Rhree, who was a Methodist. Moreover, many high officials of the Rhree government were Christians. It seemed as if this honeymoon period would last forever. However, it soon became clear that the close adherence of the church to the state was causing fatal damage to both of them.³⁷ The long-term dictatorship of the Syngman Rhree government disintegrated from corruption, injustice, and dictatorial power, while the leaders of the church in South Korea kept silence about the corrupt government because of their own participation in it. In other words, the church in South Korea had to undergo a bitter experience because of its active involvement in political matters.

What, then, was the natural conclusion of Christians

³⁶ Song, 242.

³⁷ Lee, 201.

observing the situation in North Korea and South Korea? And what impact was felt in pulpit and pew? It would not be difficult for many Christians to conclude that active socio-political involvement should not be recommended for the Christian life. As a result, many preachers turned from political preaching to biblical or evangelical preaching. Congregations also expected their pastors to adopt this orientation. This may be an answer to the question of why most Christians in Korea today do not want their preachers to deal with socio-political matters from the pulpit.

A final aspect of this period which had an impact upon preaching is, needless to say, the Korean War of June 1950. During the War, the main targets of the Communist persecution were the politicians and the Christians. The church had to be torn by this second suffering. Statistics describing the destruction of the church include churches destroyed: Presbyterian-152, Methodist-84, Holiness-27, Baptist-4; martyred pastors: Presbyterian-117, Methodist-44, Holiness-11. The total massacred were 128,900 with the missing numbering 360,000.³⁸

Out of 75 church members, 73 persons were reported killed at the hand of the Communists in Wan-dang Church located in Chun-Buk Province.³⁹ Many prominent preachers met martyrdom

³⁸ Min, 349.

³⁹ Lin-Su Kim, A History of Martyrdom in the Korean Church and the Martyr's Sermon (Seoul: Kimoo Sa, 1968), 146.

at the cruel hands of the Communist soldiers or were kidnapped and taken to North Korea.

Why so many preachers? Is it because they did not have a chance to flee from the hands of the Communists? This is particularly true. But it is very important to note that many preachers who had opportunities to escape did not run away because of their commitment to the office of preaching. For them to give up the office of preaching in their own churches by fleeing meant the betrayal of Christ and his church. In other words, they kept in mind an inner slogan: "To keep the pulpit until death." (In Korean the words are Kang-dan-Sa-soo.)⁴⁰

This slogan of the preachers during the Korean War seems to have led many pastors to their martyrdom. An excellent example of this is the Reverend Ik-Du Kim (1874-1950), one of the most outstanding preachers of his generation. Allen D. Clark describes Kim's beautiful end as follows:

The end came on October 14, 1950. He had been leading a day break prayer meeting in the church. Just as he pronounced benediction, the door burst open and Communist soldiers rushed into the building, shooting as they came. Mr. Kim fell mortally wounded and died within a few minutes. He had closed his long career of almost eighty years with an act of martyrdom.⁴¹

In fact, the martyr's slogan, "To keep the pulpit until death," has been one of the factors which has led Korean

⁴⁰ Kang-dan means "the pulpit or preaching"; Sa-soo means "to keep until death."

⁴¹ Clark, 442.

pastors to put the preaching office first in their pastoral practice.

Another example which should be noted in relation to preaching during the Korean War is the Reverend Yang-Won Son (1902-1950). The Reverend Son and his preaching is representative of all the preachers during the war. The focus of his preaching was on love, forgiveness, and reconciliation in Christ. Not only did he preach on these themes but he also practiced them throughout his life. In other words, he is a significant figure in the history of the Korean church in the sense that he was a doer of Christian truth as well as a preacher of it. He worked with the lepers in a church named the Ae-Yang Won at Yosu city. Just before the Korean War, there was a local communist uprising in which a part of the city was taken over by the Communists for a brief time. Many landlords and reactionaries, including Christians, were killed as enemies by the Communist impromptu courts. Mr. Son's two sons, who had been attending high school in Yosu city, were killed at the hands of communist students led by Chae-Son Ahn. Two days later the riot was over and Ahn, the leader who had shot Reverend Son's two sons, was arrested. Then Reverend Son asked the commander of the government forces for mercy for the Communist student who had killed his sons. The officer could not believe his ears at first, but he also could not help turning the boy over to Reverend Son, because of his ardent supplication.

My sons were ready to die, for they were Christians. This boy is not ready. He does not know the Lord Jesus. Please turn him over to me. I want to tell him of the love of the Lord Jesus for him. At least give him a stay of execution. I shall send a request for pardon to the president....⁴²

The communist student, Chae-Son Ahn, was sent to Mr. Son's home to be his adopted son and later went on to seminary in Pusan City to follow Christ because of God's love shown by Mr. Son. Indeed, Mr. Son was not only a preacher of the Christian truth, but also a practicer of it. Allen D. Clark describes Son's martyrdom:

When the Korean War came, the Communist forces pushed south and occupied the southern province. Son was urged to flee, but would not leave his leper congregation. He was arrested and....shot.⁴³

The Church in Maturity and Preaching (1960-to present)

The three decades between 1960 and the present have been an unusually revolutionary period in the history of the state and of the church as well. In this revolutionary age, all the Christians in Korea have grown in both numbers and character, through various changes and shocks.

The first shock came on April 19, 1960. As noted above, the twelve years of Rhee's dictatorship were brought to an end by the Student Revolution of April 1960. The trembling voice of President Rhree, who announced his resignation, gave a shock to all Christians in South Korea. Professor Jae-Joon Kim evaluated the Student Revolution as "an action for

⁴² Clark, 451.

⁴³ Clark, 452.

justice," which might be categorized as an event similar to the Independent Movement of March 1919.⁴⁴

Before people had sufficient time to accept the reality of the Student Revolution, another shock was brought about by the Military Revolution of May 16, 1961. This time the church seemed bewildered because General Chung-Hee Park was not a Christian and had seized "political power through military forces."⁴⁵

At first, the relationship between the church and the military government seemed favorable, since General Park cordially invited the Christian leaders to his office on that same day of 1961. At that time the church leaders did not demand anything because Park had already promised that he and the military group should step down to their previous position of national defense when the Military Revolution's goal had been attained. But the promise turned out to be false when General Park ran for the presidency. In October 1963, he was elected president of the new government, which was nothing but a military government. Even though the new constitution placed a limit of two terms on any occupant of the presidency, all kinds of efforts were made by Park and his followers, to prolong the military dictatorship. On October 1972, they created the so-called Yushin (Revitalizing) Constitution,

⁴⁴ Jae-Joon Kim, Collection of Rev. Jae-Joon Kim, vol. 2 (Seoul: Han-Kuk Theological Seminary, 1971), 306.

⁴⁵ Lee, 206.

which allowed Park a third term of presidency and concentrated the political dictatorship in his hands.

The eighteen years of Park's dictatorship, from the military Revolution of May 1961 to the presidential assassination of October 1979, have divided the existing church in South Korea into two rival camps: pro-government and anti-government. There seems to be no other group than these two because church leaders had to determine their attitudes toward Park's dictatorial regime. If one kept silence, one was identified with the pro-government group. In this respect, it seems essential to know how those two groups of the church have come to stand against each other. The separate stands have created a deep gap between them, and formulated their own theologies and their own ways of ministry in relation to preaching.

Let us consider the pro-government group. It is very interesting to see that most of the church leaders of this group represent the conservative church.⁴⁶ Some conservative leaders openly voted for the Park government and the Yushin Constitution, and have criticized liberal church leaders who opposed this constitution.⁴⁷ It is also noteworthy that most

⁴⁶ These include the Koryu Presbyterian Church, the Jesus Presbyterian Church (anti-ecumenical), part of the Jesus Presbyterian Church (pro-ecumenical side), the Holiness Church, the Baptist Church, the Assembly of God, the Church of Christ, and the Nazarene Church. The conservative churches that kept silent were the Lutheran Church, the Salvation Army, and part of the Anglican Church.

⁴⁷ Lee, 218.

of the conservative leaders in the pro-government group were the ones who had personally experienced the Communist persecution in the North and fled for freedom of the faith to the South. They insist that the church should co-operate with the government, though dictatorial, so long as the government provides defense against the Communist regime in North Korea and grants freedom of faith. They have criticized the radical involvement of anti-government leaders because it seemed to harm the security of South Korea and give the Communists in the North a chance to invade the South. The opinion of conservative church leaders seems to have been accepted, without any objection, by the majority of Christians who had already undergone the terrible disasters of the Korean War. This acceptance is also in accordance with the purpose of the Yushin Constitution.

Furthermore, conservative leaders have reproached liberal church leaders for misleading innocent Christians and for betraying the gospel of Christ by opposing the Yushin Constitution.⁴⁸ They have also demanded that the church should devote itself to religious or spiritual affairs, while the government devotes itself to socio-political affairs. For this reason, the conservative church had been able to compromise with Park's dictatorial government in a peaceful or co-operative relationship. During this period most of the revival campaigns, led by the key leaders of the conservative

⁴⁸ Lee, 219.

church were planned and pushed ahead under the auspices of the government. These evangelistic or revival campaigns included: "Win 30 Million for Christ" (1965), "Billy Graham Crusade" (1972-1973), "Explo '74" (1974), and "Win the Whole Nation for Christ" (1977). Besides these movements, according to Professor Yong-Bok Kim, there were "Conference on Anti-Communism and Security" (1968), "Breakfast Meeting for the President" (1968-Present), and "the Seoul Declaration" (1975).⁴⁹

However, no one would deny the fact that one of the main factors of rapid church growth during this period has been due to this kind of revival movement, led by conservative church leaders, as church growth statistics demonstrated.

What, then, is the impact of the conservative side upon the pulpit in the Korean church? There seems to be both positive and negative aspects. First, preaching has been thought of as the most important factor of church growth. Since the early 1970s, concern about preaching has increased so that various works and translations on preaching have been published. Along with this publication, numerous collections of sermons have been issued one after another. This shows that among pastors much concern has been paid to preaching.

Second, a revivalistic or evangelistic style of preaching has begun to prevail, not only in revival meetings, but also in public worship services on Sundays. One of the main

⁴⁹ Lee, 236.

reasons for the Korean preference for this style seems to lie in the mass evangelistic movements and revival campaigns mentioned above. It is as if the kingdom of the revivalist has come down to the earth of Korea. This revivalist style of preaching has some characteristics, which have formed a modern style of preaching in contrast to conventional preaching.

A call-and-response style of preaching, which might be seen in black church preaching, has been introduced and demanded. For example, a preacher asks his/her congregation to say "Amen." If there is no shout of "Amen" in response, preachers regard their preaching as a failure.

Although the repentance of sin is urged in this style of preaching, repentance is asked for merely to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit, or to obtain material blessings from God, not for salvation by faith in Christ or for sanctification in love and justice.

The Korean responsibility for world mission, in its narrow sense, has been emphasized. Owing to this evangelistic style of preaching, many churches in Korea since the late 1960s have adopted the slogan: "Win souls of the world for Christ." An excellent example of this kind of preaching is seen in the Reverend Hyun-Kyun Shin and his sermons.⁵⁰ In

⁵⁰ See the sermon collections of Hyun-Kyun Shin: Our Nation's Livelihood, [ser.] 1 (Seoul: Eunsung-Moonwha Sa, 1969); Above and Below the Mountain, [ser.] 1 (Seoul: Eunsung-Moonwha Sa, 1966); and Vision and Faith, [ser.] 1 (Seoul: Epel Publishing, 1971).

most cases, the revivalist or evangelistic style of preaching has been simple, exciting, and even powerful.

The third aspect of conservatism is related to the second. This kind of preaching has met some challenges or criticisms. For one thing, evangelists and revivalists are apt to compartmentalize the whole gospel of Christ, so that they have preached a half gospel in terms of personal salvation. For another thing, preaching has been criticized as too emotional, manipulative of the congregation, and far from the heart of the gospel. In short, this kind of preaching has become large in quantity, but diminutive in its quality.

Then let us consider the anti-government group and their impact upon preaching in Korea. Most of the church leaders of the radical group have come from the liberal-ecumenical churches.⁵¹ Even though they represent the minority group of Korean Christianity, they raised a prophetic voice against the long Park dictatorship. It is true that the Park regime achieved a remarkable record of economic development since the 1960s. However, the rapid economic development forced by that government has resulted in social injustice, a sense of frustration among many people, and consequently, an anti-government mood among students, intellectuals, and liberal church leaders.

⁵¹ These include the Christ Presbyterian Church, the Methodist Church, and part of the Jesus Presbyterian Church (pro-ecumenical side).

Since the late 1960s, the key leaders of the liberal church have declared their theological convictions and called for Christian action and participation in the struggle against structural injustice, corruption and a dehumanizing government. In November 1969, the clash between conservatives and liberals seemed to reach its climax when the former charged that theological convictions of the liberal side had misled the church and innocent Christians. In spite of this criticism, the radical leaders attempted to defend and promote the rights of human beings and to urge restraint of the immense powers of the Park dictatorship. There was a series of acts of political repression, which stimulated liberal church leaders to participate more actively in political matters.⁵²

All of the incidents were due to popular resistance against the Yushin (Revitalizing) Constitution which allowed for the concentration of power in Chung-Hee Park's hands. Thousands of people, including four hundred professors and eight hundred students, were reported to have been arrested and sentenced to long prison terms, even sentenced to death.⁵³

⁵² These acts included: the arrests of the Rev. Myung K. Eun, December 13, 1972; the advocates of "Democracy Restoration," April 22, 1973; a young pastors group, January 17, 1974; and Christian professors and students, April 3, 1974; expulsion of two American missionaries, G. E. Ogle and James Sinnot, December 14, 1974; arrest of the Rev. Hee-nam Kim, November 5, 1977; the Christian Academy Incident, March 9, 1979; arrest of the General Secretary of the KNCC; dismissal of 12 Christian professors, May 1975; and others.

⁵³ Lee, 227-30.

Facing up to this political oppression, the liberal church leaders issued the "Christian Declaration '73" on May 20, 1973 and the "Theological Declaration '74" in November 1974. To sum them up, their theological convictions were as follows: (1) The Park dictatorship is a "destructive rule" by force and threat alone. It betrays God's mandate for justice, so it is "in rebellion against God." (2) The Park regime is destroying freedom of conscience and religious belief. Therefore, the church must be "defenders of conscience for the people." (3) The dictatorship in Korea is using "systematic deception" to control the people. Christians as witnesses to the truth have always struggled "to break any system of deception." (4) The Park dictatorship uses "sinister and inhuman" means to destroy its opponents. Since God has created human beings, violation of humanity is "a murderous act." (5) Even though the Park regime has achieved economic development, this development was accomplished by "victims of severe exploitation" and socio-economic injustice. This kind of economic system, in which "the powerful dominate the poor," should be destroyed.⁵⁴

Because of this declaration, not only the gap between the radical group and the Park government, but also the gap between the conservatives and liberals has widened. Even some

⁵⁴ "Theological Declaration by Christian Ministers in the Republic of Korea, 1973," Mission Trends No. 3: Third World Theologies, eds. Gerald H. Anderson and Thomas F. Stransky (New York: Paulist Press, 1976), 229-31.

of the radical leaders have criticized mass evangelistic movements during this period for having deprived Christians of historical consciousness and manipulated them in order to enlarge conservative power.⁵⁵ From this point of view, personal salvation and social redemption have separated into two extremes. One of the places in which this polarizing phenomenon has been most clearly evident is the Korean pulpit in the late 1970s.

The impact of liberal preaching upon the pulpit in Korea has been threefold. First, liberal church leaders have introduced into the pulpit liberating preaching, which has laid emphasis on such themes as the socio-political responsibility of Christians for others, the historical consciousness of Christianity, taking up the cross for Christ, human dignity, struggle against the devil.⁵⁶ An excellent example of liberating preaching is given by Dr. Chung-Joon Kim, a former president of Han-Kuk Theological Seminary. "The Church," he says, "is not a place for believers alone.... It must be a place for others.... This is not the theology of the WCC but the theology of Early Christianity, which Peter and John show us...."⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Lee, 236.

⁵⁶ Those preachers are the Reverend Jae Joon Kim, Won Yong Kang, Chan Kook Kim, Hyung Kyu Park, Duck Hyun Cho, et al.

⁵⁷ A Collection of Representative Preaching in Korea (Seoul: Hankuk-Moonsu-Sunkyo Hoe, 1978), 1:145.

Second, most of the liberating preachers are criticized for including so many difficult ideas in their sermons that it is impossible to hold these ideas in mind long enough to relate them to the hearer's lives. In other words, this liberating preaching is apt to be "too formal and impersonal." Ideas, terms, and thoughts used in this kind of preaching are too difficult for the common congregation to understand and to accept. For example, one of the sermons by the Reverend Won Yong Kang says, "The church as the community of the Holy Spirit cannot but challenge all kinds of oppression, falsehood, and dehumanization, which have been identified with the spirit of evil or with the spirit of slavery."⁵⁸

In contrast to liberating preaching, the evangelical preaching of conservative preachers in Korea has used simple, common, personal terms or illustrations, which the congregations enjoy. For this reason, this kind of liberating preaching seems to have been separated from the majority of Korean congregations. The third impact is the most negative. As noted above, the radical group has introduced political theology, revolutionary theology, black theology, and liberation theology, which emphasize action and praxis rather than word and theory. As a result, in the liberal group, preaching has been regarded as "word" alone and has been ignored among students and intellectuals who attempt to

⁵⁸ A Collection of Representative Preaching in Korea, 2: 522.

fulfill "the Messianic Kingdom" in the world through action.⁵⁹
This has caused a crisis of preaching.

To sum up, evangelical preaching has contributed to an increasing interest in preaching among both the pastors and the congregation whereas the liberal preachers have tended to disregard preaching in favor of action in terms of positive involvement in socio-political affairs. In other words, owing to the two rival groups, the gap between personal salvation and social redemption has become so wide that most preachers in Korea have truncated the gospel of Christ and have failed to fulfill God's holistic vision in the world. However, this is not to say that there is no one who has attempted to preach the whole gospel in terms of both personal salvation and social redemption. In fact, there have been a few preachers who have tried to deal with the whole gospel in their sermons. But they have not been consistent in doing that and, with time, most of them shifted their preaching styles to focus on personal salvation alone.

Therefore, the church in Korea is in desperate demand for a new model of preaching which has the ability to combine evangelical preaching and liberating preaching. This new model may reduce the gap between personal salvation and social

⁵⁹ "The Theological Declaration" (1973), ends with the following words: "We resolve that we will follow the footsteps of our Lord, living among our oppressed and poor people, standing against political oppression, and participating in the transformation of history, for this is the only way to the Messianic Kingdom." Anderson and Stransky, 232.

redemption, as well as the gap between evangelization and humanization.

CHAPTER 3

Theology of Expository Preaching

In this chapter, let us consider both the Word of God theology of Martin Luther and Karl Barth and the theology of Jurgen Moltmann as the theological context for expository preaching. In this connection, this chapter asserts the priestly function of preaching in order to support the theology of expository preaching.

The Word of God

There is a plainly stated text in 2 Tim. 3:16-4:2 which reads:

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the Word, be urgent in season and out of season, convince, rebuke, and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching. (RSV)

The text avows that all the scriptures are inspired of God, that all the scriptures are God-breathed, that the writing is the writing of God and contains the breath and the presence of God. On the basis of that statement, Paul makes the appeal to his young son in the ministry that he "preach the Word." Therefore, this also is our assignment as preachers. Our pulpit task is plainly stated and plainly outlined. We are to preach the whole Bible, all of it. However, the crisis of today's preaching is that the pulpit

deemphasizes the Bible as the Word of God. It is true that the preaching of the Word of God is the word of God.

Ben Price emphasizes biblical preaching:

I definitely think that there is an increasing need and even demand for biblical preaching today as over against topical preaching. I think that our people are about fed up with listening to the personal opinions of individuals from pulpits which fail to be grounded in the eternal truths of God. In my experience, people are far more receptive to a mediocre presentation from the pulpit that is grounded in the Word than they are to more proficient, more professional job that fails to rest solidly on the gospel message.¹

Why is this so? On this we must agree profoundly with Alan Richardson, who said, "The Bible is and remains the appointed means of God's conversation with men."² Therefore, the Bible as the Word of God is the source and the standard for preaching.

Martin Luther

For Martin Luther the Word of God is the deed of God. All the concrete and created things of the world are Words of God. All the events of history are Words of God. But the central events of history are two in number, and they form the core of the two Testaments--the event of the Exodus for the Old Testament, the event of Christ for the New Testament.

Luther discerned the Word of God in three stages:

1. The Creative Word. By this Word God created the

¹ Quoted in James W. Cox, A Guide to Biblical Preaching (Nashville: Abingdon, 1976), 18.

² Alan Richardson, Preface to Bible Study (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1944), 13.

World.

2. The Redemptive Word. This is Christ, the second person of the Trinity. This is the Word of John's prologue. The need for such a Word lies in human beings' sinfulness; a human being in his/her bound condition is in need of a liberator. God, on God's part, has built redemption into the very structure of the universe so that even the trees and birds speak of the forgiveness of God. But, centrally, he has spoken God's redemptive Word in Christ. The Bible is the Word of Christ because it is the book of Christ. Christ is the center of the Old Testament, not merely because the Old Testament predicts his coming, but because in his divine preexistence Christ the Savior worked covertly in the deliverance of the Israelites from bondage and did all the other redeeming acts of the Old Covenant. And, obviously, Christ is the center of the New Testament not covertly, but explicitly and openly.

3. The Word of God spoken by Christ is identical with the Word of God now spoken by the church through preaching. Luther's strong bent toward action shows in his insistence that the Word of God had to come through the actual voice of the preacher in communicating with a congregation; for, as he said, the church is not a pen-house but a mouth-house. The Word of Christ is made contemporary through such preaching by

the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit.³

Karl Barth

Anyone who deals with Karl Barth's theology of the Word of God will be amazed at his abundant writings on preaching. No other theologian, as Robert Duke said, has devoted more thought and writing to preaching, not only in published sermons, but also in theological articles.⁴ The first two volumes of Church Dogmatics deal with the theology of the Word of God in its relation to the mission of the church. In his work, The Word of God and the Word of Man Barth demonstrates the significance and centrality of preaching in church proclamation.

The Word of God and the mission of the church. According to Barth, the language about God found in the church is proclamation, as far as "it is directed towards man in the form of preaching and sacrament" in accordance with the church's commission to tell him the Word of God.⁵ However, for Barth, not all language about God is to be found in the church is proclamation. In other words, prayer, singing, confession, and the teaching of the church cannot as such pretend to be church proclamation. Barth insists that "the

³ Jaroslav Pelikan, Luther's Works. Companion vol. Luther, the Expositor: Introduction to the Exegetical Writings (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1959), 48-52.

⁴ Robert W. Duke, The Sermon as God's Word: Theologies for Preaching (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980), 14.

⁵ Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, vol. 1/1, trans. G. T. Thomson (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1936), 51.

language about God" in the church can be proclamation "where it is directed towards men" with the definite claim and with the definite "expectation, that it has to declare the Word of God" to men.⁶ Barth defines church proclamation in detail as follows:

Proclamation is human language in and through which God Himself speaks, like a king through the mouth of his herald, which moreover is meant to be heard and apprehended as language in and through which God Himself speaks, and so heard and apprehended in faith as the divine decision upon life and death, as the divine acquittal, the⁷ eternal law and the eternal gospel both together.

Although church proclamation involves both preaching and sacrament, Barth makes the preaching primary and the sacrament secondary. At this point, he differs from Catholicism which puts the sacrament first, so that the church is apt to claim itself to be the sacrament first, so that the church is apt to claim itself to be the object of faith. For Barth, it is a great danger when the church puts itself with the sacrament in the place of God: "The church is not the object of faith, we do not believe in the church; but we do believe that in this congregation the work of the Holy Spirit becomes an event."⁸ "To serve the Word of God" and to point away from itself to Jesus Christ through whom God has previously

⁶ Barth, Church Dogmatics, 1/1: 56.

⁷ Barth, Church Dogmatics, 1/1: 57.

⁸ Karl Barth, Dogmatics in Outline, trans. G. T. Thomson (New York: Harper & Row, 1959), 143.

revealed himself.⁹ In this respect Barth sees the church as gathered and formed by the Word of God and is truly proclaimed, heard, and believed. Accordingly, the mission of the church is to proclaim what it has heard and believed, and it has been commissioned to serve the Word of God.¹⁰

Barth's theology of preaching. It is well-known that Barth deals with the word of God in its threefold form. Barth explains the Word of God as preaching, with four concentric circles.

1. Commission. The Word of God is the "commission" upon the givenness of which proclamation must rest. In this first circle, the Word of God as preached means "man's language about God on the basis of an indication by God Himself fundamentally transcending all human causation, and so devoid of all human basis, merely occurring as a fact and requiring to be acknowledged."¹¹ The Word of God is available to man only as God chooses to make it known. In this respect the church has received the commission from God to make the Word of God known to the whole world.

2. Object. In this second circle, the Word of God as preached means "man's language about God on the basis of God's self-objectification which is neither present nor predictable nor relatable to any design, but real solely in freedom of His

⁹ Barth, Church Dogmatics, 1/1: 57.

¹⁰ Barth, Church Dogmatics, 1/1: 57.

¹¹ Barth, Church Dogmatics, 1/1: 101.

grace," in virtue of which God wills to be the object of this language.¹²

3. Judgment. The Word of God is the judgment by which church proclamation can alone become real proclamation. Proclamation is also asked whether it is true or not. "What is the criterion here?" In this third circle, the Word of God preached now means "man's language about God, which according to God's own judgment can not be anticipated and never passes into our control; and in view of the object proclaimed as well as of the subject proclaiming, is true language" and demands obedience.¹³

4. Event. In this final circle, the Word of God as preached is "the event itself," in which church proclamation becomes real. Barth observes that those three circles are not sufficient to define the concept of the Word of God as preaching, because even from all those three points of view "the realization of proclamation might be regarded as a merely external, accidental characteristic." As such, still remained the event of the will, and execution of the man who proclaims.¹⁴

However, Barth does not exclude "the volition and execution of the man proclaiming" in real proclamation, because he believes that man's language about God is "not only

¹² Barth, Church Dogmatics, 1/1: 102.

¹³ Barth, Church Dogmatics, 1/1: 104.

¹⁴ Barth, Church Dogmatics, 1/1: 104.

man's language," but also "primarily and decisively God's own language."¹⁵ In this fourth circle, the Word of God as preached is a miracle. As Jesus Christ became true man, so real proclamation becomes "an event on the level of all other human events."¹⁶ But as Christ is not only true man, the Word of God as preached is not only the preacher's human volition and execution, but also primary and decisively "the divine volition and execution." For this reason, the human element need not to be omitted in preaching. At this point, Barth notes that God and the human element are not two factors operating side by side, because the human element is in "the thing created by God." This human element is in "the service of God as far as it is in the state of obedience."¹⁷ In the case of obedience, the event of human language about God is not set aside, but rather exalted. In this fourth circle, Barth defines preaching as man's language about God, in and through which God Himself speaks about Himself.

Centrality of the Bible and the task of preaching.

Following the footsteps of Paul and Luther, Barth sees the Bible as the "recollection of God's past revelation."¹⁸ For Barth, the Bible is God's revelation of Himself in the person of Jesus Christ. In this connection, Barth insists that

¹⁵ Barth, Church Dogmatics, 1/1: 104.

¹⁶ Barth, Church Dogmatics, 1/1: 105.

¹⁷ Barth, Church Dogmatics, 1/1: 105.

¹⁸ Barth, Church Dogmatics, 1/1: 105.

church proclamation must be ventured upon the Bible in which God's self-revelation is discerned.¹⁹ If the Holy Scriptures are a witness to God's self-revelation and can come to us only as God wills to make it known, what then is the task of the preacher?

Barth's dogmatic stance that God is the subject of biblical witness implies that the preacher must be in a state of "obedient listening" in order to proclaim what the text really denotes.²⁰ For the preacher, this obedient listening is meant to set aside his own thoughts and understanding and to listen humbly. In this case, what is required of a preacher is not abolition of his thoughts and opinions, but their subordination to the Word of God, that is, the Bible.

Herein lies Barth's peculiar style and form of preaching. Most modern preachers have been taught to prepare sermons in order to meet the needs of the people or to answer the questions of the people. For Barth, this concern by no means is rejected, but this kind of human need or human question is secondary to the divine question. In other words, the primary emphasis in preaching is not laid upon the questions of our daily lives, the needs of our neighbor, and the problems of the society we live in, but first of all, upon the divine question as to whether man has a right relationship with God.

The main stress in preaching: the divine question. Now

¹⁹ Barth, Church Dogmatics, 1/1: 111.

²⁰ Barth, Church Dogmatics, 1/1: 105.

let us look more closely at the assumptions made by Barth. When the congregation brings "the great question of human life" and "seeks an answer for it," the preachers try to give an answer.²¹ According to Barth, the biblical way of answering this question is to ask in return, is it true? "Is it true that there is in all things a meaning, a goal, and a God?" This is the divine or biblical question. Thus Barth assumes that, in two respects, the divine question differs from and alters the question.

In the first place, it gives his question its first real depth and meaning- and in a way that leads even the most frightened, the most humbled, and the most despairing man on to the edge of a worse abyss than he has dreamed of; in a way that makes gladness and grief, good and bad, light and darkness, Yes and No as we know them, the contradictory elements of our existence, suddenly draw very close together, and our most instant and urgent questions seem trivial and die away; in a way that shows us that all our previous questioning has really been preparation which now arises, Are we asking in dead earnest? Are we asking after God?²²

In the second place, our questions about human life, even in their highest forms, are mere questions to which the answers sought are additional and must be matched to them. But as the Bible takes these questions, translating them into the inescapable question about God, one simply cannot ask or hear the "question" without hearing the answer. The person who says that the Bible leads us to where finally we hear only a great No or see a great void, proves only that he has not yet been led thither. This No is really Yes. This judgment is grace. This condemnation is forgiveness. This death is life.... The Question is

²¹ Karl Barth, The Word of God and the Word of Man, trans. Douglas Horton (New York: Harper & Bros., 1957), 116.

²² Barth, Word of God and the Word of Man, 117-18.

the answer.²³

In this respect, Barth makes it clear that the main stress in preaching lies in the vertical relationship between God and human beings. Accordingly, the horizontal relationship between a human being and his/her neighbor, between a man/woman and his/her society, and a human being and the world he/she lives in seems to die away in preaching, if they were to be dealt with not in preaching, but only in the sphere of Christian ethics.

Appraisals and learnings. There are a few comments on all this and Barth's thought on preaching. First, Barth has contributed to putting preaching at the center of all church practice. That which imparts faith, and nourishes life in the congregation, is the words the preacher proclaims, in which and through which God is available to us and is recognized as truly being present among the people. Therefore, there is no more momentous and decisive event in the world than Christian preaching.

Second, Barth seems to be quite correct when he defines the subject matter of preaching as the right relationship between God and human beings, namely, in a personal relationship between them. However, from the viewpoint of God's holistic vision, he seems to fail to deal with the horizontal relationship between a human being and his/her society in terms of social redemption, even though Barth by

²³ Barth, Word of God and the Word of Man, 120.

no means rejects it.

Third, Barth's theology of the Word of God has tended to lay its emphasis on the word as if he forgets the incarnational aspect of Christian revelation. For Barth, as Avery Dulles points out, it appears that the Word has become not flesh but only word.²⁴ For this reason one might be tempted to think that Christian action plays no role in preaching.

Political Hermeneutics

The shortcomings of Barth's theology of preaching seem to be supplemented by Jurgen Moltmann's concept of the political hermeneutics of the gospel. The shortcomings exist in Barth and Moltmann in which the questions of our lives, the needs of our neighbor, or the problems of the world in terms of socio-political affairs are not set aside. Let us consider the meaning of salvation in its relation to the mission of the church assumed by Moltmann.

Moltmann insists that in order to know the goal of Christian mission the eschatological background in the Old Testament, against which the Christian proclamation of the gospel takes place, must be taken seriously. Then it becomes clear that the goal of the mission of the church aims at salvation. However this salvation, Moltmann asserts, must be understood as shalom in the Old Testament sense.

²⁴ Avery Dulles, Models of the Church (Garden City, N.Y.: Image Books, 1974), 90.

This [shalom] does not mean merely salvation of the soul, individual rescue from the evil world, comfort for the troubled conscience, but also the realization of the eschatological hope of justice, the humanizing of man, the socializing of humanity, peace for all creation.²⁵

Moltmann continues to insist that this other side of salvation has always been disregarded in the history of Christianity. For Moltmann, the mission of the church embraces not only the proclamation of the gospel, but also the whole activity of the church for its realization.²⁶

In this respect, it can be said that Moltmann's concept of salvation as shalom demonstrates the other side of preaching which has often been given too little concern in the preaching history of the church.

The Gospel for the Poor

Jesus proclaimed the gospel of the kingdom to the poor and called captives into the liberty of the coming kingdom. For Moltmann, the word "poor" means not only economic, social and physical poverty, but also psychological, moral and religious poverty.

The poor are all those who have to endure acts of violence and injustice without being able to defend themselves. The poor are all who have to exist physically and spiritually on the fringe of death, who have nothing to live for and to whom life has nothing to offer. The poor are all who are at the

²⁵ Jurgen Moltmann, Theology of Hope: On the Ground and the Implications of a Christian Eschatology, trans. James W. Leitch (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), 329.

²⁶ Jurgen Moltmann, The Church in the Power of the Spirit: A Contribution of Messianic Ecclesiology, trans. Margaret Kohl (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 76.

mercy of others, who live with empty and open hands.²⁷

Moltmann does not confine poverty to a religious dimension alone, but extends it to the physical or socio-political dimension. Poverty is an expression which denotes the "enslavement and dehumanization of man" in many dimensions.²⁸ In the same way, Moltmann seeks the meaning of "riches." From the viewpoint of the Old Testament, the rich are the men of violence who oppress the poor and enrich themselves at another's expense. Riches are also multi-dimensional and "extend economic exploitation, by way of social supremacy, to the complacency of the people who look after themselves in every sector of life, ignore the rights of others," and forget to give thanks for anything.²⁹

The rich are all the people who live with tightly clenched hands. They are neither dependent on others nor open for others. The rich will only be helped when they recognize their own poverty and enter the fellowship of the poor, especially the poor whom they have made poor through violence.³⁰

In this connection, Moltmann sees poverty not only in the poor but also in the rich. Therefore, for him, the object of the proclamation of the church is both the poor and the rich.

Conversion to the Future

Jesus' mission, as summed up in Mark, is: "The time is

²⁷ Moltmann, Church in the Power of the Spirit, 79.

²⁸ Moltmann, Church in the Power of the Spirit, 79.

²⁹ Moltmann, Church in the Power of the Spirit, 79.

³⁰ Moltmann, Church in the Power of the Spirit, 79.

fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel" (1:14). Traditionally the notion of conversion has tended to be interpreted at the individual level. However, Moltmann attempts to extend the notion of conversion to the collective political level because he regards the gospel itself as the "mediation" between the coming kingdom of God and the person who is called to repent. Moltmann believes that in the gospel the coming kingdom is present through the Word and that the imminence of the kingdom as preached and believed makes people free to repent, free to turn away their sinful ways of life and their corrupt circumstances.³¹

For this reason conversion, for Moltmann, is both personal and relational. It includes "soul and body, the individual as well as his community, his own life as well as the system in which he lives." Conversion means not only the turning away from personal sins, but also "the turning from this world of oppression, death and evil to the future of life, righteousness and freedom."³²

Political Hermeneutics of Liberation

In trying to connect the discussion of political theology with the ideas of a theology which has been developed in Latin America, Moltmann attempts to pay concrete attention to "religious problems of politics and to laws, compulsions and

³¹ Moltmann, Church in the Power of the Spirit, 80.

³² Moltmann, Church in the Power of the Spirit, 80.

the vicious circles" which oppress human life and living humanity.³³ Moltmann sees the freedom of faith to be lived out in political freedom. Accordingly, he insists that the freedom of faith urges people on towards liberating actions, because the freedom of faith makes people "painfully aware of suffering in situations of exploitation, oppression, alienation and captivity."³⁴

In this respect, political hermeneutics for Moltmann is to reflect "the new situation of God" in the inhuman situation of human beings. This is all in order to break down any "hierarchical relationship" which deprives human beings of self-determination and opportunity to develop their humanity.³⁵ Moreover, political hermeneutics calls for dialogue or critical solidarity with socialist, democratic, humanistic and anti-racist movements in the struggle against the forms of inhumanity.

Political hermeneutics of faith is not a reduction of the theology of the cross to a political ideology, but an interpretation of it in political discipleship. Political hermeneutics set out to recognize the social and economic influence on theological institutions and languages, in order to bring their liberating content into the political dimension and to make them relevant towards really freeing men from their misery in certain vicious circles. Political hermeneutics asks not only what

³³ Jurgen Moltmann, The Crucified God: The Cross of Christ as the Foundation and Criticism of Christian Theology, trans. R. A. Wilson and John Bowden (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), 317.

³⁴ Moltmann, Crucified God, 317.

³⁵ Moltmann, Crucified God, 318.

sense it makes to talk of God, but also what is the function of such talk and what effect it has.³⁶

Therefore, it is implied that by means of political hermeneutics, Christian talk about God in terms of preaching is made meaningful and audible not only to Christians but also to non-Christians. It is clear from Moltmann's assertion that in political hermeneutics none of the so-called substance of faith is lost; rather, faith gains substance in its political incarnations and overcomes its abstraction.

Appraisals and Learning

There are two comments to be made on Moltmann's political hermeneutics of the gospel in its relation to preaching. First of all, he has helped to broaden the proclamation of the church so that preachers are able to deal with all of the expressions of the church in their sermons. In particular, owing to his political hermeneutics of the gospel, the questions of our daily lives, the needs of the people and the problems of society are seriously dealt with in preaching.

Second, Moltmann seems right when he worries about his doctrine of the church to be too conservative for some and to be too progressive for others. As far as Moltmann's political hermeneutics of the gospel are concerned, it might be said that he is progressive. In spite of this fact, he has attempted not only to deal conservatively with the progressive elements of the liberal church, but also to deal progressively

³⁶ Moltmann, Crucified God, 318.

with the conservative forms of the Christian tradition. As we have seen above, Moltmann has tried to interpret salvation, conversion and liberation on both personal and socio-political levels. In this respect, Moltmann's approach is more dialectical than some conservative listeners insist.

We can learn from Moltmann's theology in its relation to preaching. He has endeavored to deal with both the divine question and the human question. In this respect, sometimes he seems to be in a similar line of thought with Karl Barth. And, sometimes, he seems to be far from Barth because he is so interested in the human question that it tends to overwhelm the question of God as stated in the gospel. For example, evaluating Barth's theology of the Word of God, Moltmann sees that the Word of God and the name of God are not identical.³⁷ According to Moltmann, the Word of God is historically the expression of God's thought and will; whereas the name of God reveals God himself/herself. For Moltmann, the Word of God is historical and creates history.³⁸ For this reason, Moltmann seems to be far from Barth and seems to be inclined towards the human question of the world. However, it should not be overlooked that, on the whole, he has helped the church to achieve a balance between the divine question and the human question. For Moltmann, the church is bound to present itself both in the forum of God and in the forum of the world.

³⁷ Moltmann, Church in the Power of the Spirit, 208.

³⁸ Moltmann, Church in the Power of the Spirit, 209.

Therefore, when we want to discuss Christian preaching today we can see in Moltmann's theology a possibility of the combination of the vertical relationship between God and human beings with the horizontal relationship between human beings within the world.

Expository preaching attempts to combine Barth's theology of the Word of God with Moltmann's political hermeneutics of the gospel. It starts with Barth's divine question in which evangelistic, conservative themes are dealt with--such as the sinful state of human beings, repentance, conversion, salvation by faith in Christ and sanctification.

However, expository preaching does not end with those themes alone. It encourages the congregation to examine a broader aspect of the text and to see both the person and society at the public level, as does Moltmann.

In other words, expository preaching deals with both personal salvation and social redemption, with both the divine question and the human question, as well as both the vertical and horizontal relationship. As far as priority is concerned, the divine question or personal salvation comes first. But this divine question has to be connected with the human questions. In a similar way, personal salvation has to be extended to social redemption, in order to have spiritual growth.

Preaching

Nature and Essence of Preaching

Perhaps the most frequent question being asked today in regard to preaching is simply, "Why preach?" Such a question cannot be answered, however, until we deal with an even more basic question, "What is preaching?"

An easy response to this question on the nature of preaching, is the simple repetition of one of the many definitions of preaching that have already been given, such as:

Preaching is both words and the Word. To deny any relationship between one's words and the Word of God, whether due to one's notion of proper humility or to abdication of the authority and responsibility of ministry, is to rob preaching of its place and purpose. From such a perspective, a silent pulpit would be the logical and honest conclusion. On the other hand, to identify one's own words with the Word of God is to assume for ourselves God's role in preaching. Neither one's own strong convictions on a matter, nor the scaffolding of many verses of Scripture, can justify the claim. Nor is it the case that a changed tone of voice provides the flag by which the Word of God can be identified among many human words. Rather, the preacher takes the words provided by culture and tradition, selects from among them those that have the qualities of clarity, vitality, and appropriateness, arranges them so as to convey the truth and evoke interest, pronounces them according to the best accepted usage, and offers them to God in the sermon. It is God who fashions words into the Word.³⁹

Shorter definitions include Domenico Grasso's "The proclamation of the mystery of salvation made by God Himself through His legitimate representatives, with the goals in view

³⁹ Fred B. Craddock, Preaching (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985), 18-19.

being those of faith and conversion and the deepening in the Christian life,"⁴⁰ or P. T. Forsyth's "The Gospel prolonging and declaring itself,"⁴¹ or Robert Mounce's "The timeless link between God's great redemptive Act and man's apprehension of it."⁴² All these definitions are helpful, but they are also misleading insofar as they tend to give the impression that the prime objective of a theology of preaching is to find the perfect definition of preaching. Theology's first duty here, as elsewhere, is to describe and understand the faith and practice of the church; to determine what is normative for the present-day church.

Once again, however, we come face to face with a problem, the hermeneutical problem of establishing what is essential in the biblical message and what belongs to the cultural shell in which it was presented. There can be no doubt that preaching stands in the forefront of the activity of the apostolic church. This is the fact; what a contemporary theology of preaching must do is evaluate this fact. Was preaching simply meant to be a temporary phenomenon for "getting the church going," one which should have faded

⁴⁰ Domenico Grasso, Proclaiming God's Message: A Study in the Theology of Preaching (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1965), 108-09.

⁴¹ Peter T. Forsyth, Positive Preaching and Modern Mind (New York: Eaton & Mains, [1908]), 12-19.

⁴² Robert H. Mounce, The Essential Nature of New Testament Preaching (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1960), 155.

away after the church was established?

Many authors have, of course, dealt with the subject of preaching in the apostolic church. C. H. Dodd's work, The Apostolic Preaching, remains a classic, even though it now seems fashionable to take the author to task for drawing too sharp a distinction between kerygma and didache, or for overemphasizing the "New Age," as the content of the kerygma. He asserts that the primitive preaching is the apostolic preaching in the New Testament.⁴³

Robert Mounce in The Essential Nature of New Testament Preaching has succeeded in producing a first rate study of preaching in the earliest days of the church, pointing out the chief characteristics of the preaching of Jesus and his disciples as: (1) the divine commission; (2) the urgency of the situation; and (3) call to repentance and promise of messianic blessedness (of those who turn from their sins) and then bringing his findings to bear on the content and activity of preaching today.⁴⁴

And yet, as valuable as studies such as those of Dodd and Mounce are, they do not come to grips with one of the most basic questions; for they seem to treat the preaching of New Testament times, which they attempt to define and understand in terms of both message and activity, as a divinely created

⁴³ Charles H. Dodd, The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments (New York: Harper & Bros., 1964), 7-35.

⁴⁴ Mounce, 52-59.

reality given to the church. Such may be the case, but then again perhaps the activity of preaching is nothing more than the accepted means of public communication in the Jewish, Greek, and Roman worlds of the time. Studies of preaching in the earliest church should, therefore, give closer attention to the relationship between the preaching activity of the apostles and early Christian missionaries and the teaching-preaching methods of the Jewish rabbis and Greek orators and teachers. If it can be shown that preaching came on the scene as a radically new form of communication, then we would have a very strong argument for the continued existence of the preaching apostolate in the church. On the other hand, if such studies showed that Christian preaching was new and different only in regard to its content, then such a strong biblical basis for the necessary continuance of preaching in the church today could obviously not be given.

However, to go to the other extreme and argue on the basis of such findings that preaching no longer has a place in the activity of the church, would betray the most narrow kind of "biblical liberalism" as if what was said or done in biblical times could no longer be relevant today. What such findings would mean is that theology should not try to justify or apologize for preaching on the grounds that it is a divinely ordained activity. It would simply present it as one way of bringing human beings to faith in Jesus Christ and to a recognition and acceptance of the implications of that

faith. We suspect that with the abandoning of such appeals to the authority of Scripture, a much more convincing case could be made for the continued activity of preaching in the church, by showing the fundamental importance of the spoken word in human communication. The reason the church must preach is not simply because the Bible says so, but because a message must be communicated, and this communication will be incomplete, or misleading, or depersonalized without the spoken word. Of course it is best (i.e., the most effective) to use the spoken word in the one-to-one model of conversation, but such an ideal simply cannot be realized at all times.

Can the kind of investigation which has been suggested really be called a theology of preaching, and is it in any way necessary? I think an affirmative answer can be given to both questions.

In the first place, the subject of inquiry is an essential activity of the church. What this kind of theological investigation attempts to do is to arrive at an understanding of the nature and purpose of this activity by looking critically at its origins. My hunch is that what Christ and the apostles are giving to the church is a task (that of communicating the good news) rather than an activity as such (preaching). The necessity of such a study would lie in showing that even though it may not be possible to argue for the continuation of the preaching ministry on the basis

of New Testament texts, it can and must continue as part of the church's mission of communicating the Gospel. The spoken word, in the form of public address as well as that of conversation, continues to be the primary, or at least the most common way of sharing our ideas, beliefs, and ultimately ourselves with one another.

A theology of preaching which emphasizes the importance of the spoken word would be overstepping its limits if it implied that the spoken word was so powerful that other forms of communication could be disregarded as of no or only slight importance. There is simply too much evidence to the contrary, and such assertions would again indicate that preaching (qua activity) was arrogating to itself some kind of trans-temporal, trans-historical essence which made it possible for the church to ignore other modes of communication.

Movies, slides, music, dance, ritual acts--all these can be extremely effective in communicating the meaning of Christ and of the Christian faith in general. These methods of themselves are ambiguous and thus like Jesus: that is, even as Jesus himself was ambiguous, Jesus was looked upon by some as the Messiah, but by others as an agent of the devil.

A theology of preaching, which is ready to accept the use of many different, non-verbal modes of communicating the Christian message, would still be able to present a convincing case for the preached (or spoken) word as a necessary

complement to the other media. This new preaching theology bases its argument on a biblical understanding of faith as commitment to a person whom one accepts and recognizes in accord with the interpretation of his person and deeds that has come from God through the words of authoritative witnesses.

Priestly Function of Preaching

For centuries, preachers have struggled with the task of bringing together a human congregation and a biblical text in the act of preaching. In his book Homiletic, David Buttrick describes preaching as "mediation." He says that a preacher stands "in between" the biblical text and the people.⁴⁵

How does one unite the biblical preaching text and the listeners in proclamation? We are convinced the answer lies in the priestly function of our preaching. We must be touched by the congregation's needs for spiritual health.⁴⁶

Minister's roles. The role of a minister, and the pastor in particular, therefore, is often paralleled to the roles of Christ as prophet, priest, and king. It is apparent each role is involved in the ministers work, but the challenge is to integrate them. The administrative duties are those designated to ceremonial tasks such as communion, weddings, baptisms, etc.

⁴⁵ David Buttrick, Homiletic: Moves and Structures (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 251.

⁴⁶ See Edgar N. Jackson, How to Preach to People's Needs (New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), 15-18.

The priestly element of ministry has come to be viewed in a confined and limited scope. While the ceremonial aspect of the priestly role has great importance in and of itself, we would be neglecting other aspects of priesthood in limiting the priestly function only to these types of duties. Much more is entailed in the priestly function than ceremony.⁴⁷ The preacher who is serious about the call to proclaim the gospel must capture this priestly distinction.

Priest's dual task. Scripture clearly defines the basic responsibility of a believer as a priest. We are told explicitly in 1 Pet. 2:5: "You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood." This concept is also mentioned in Rev. 1:5b-6.

How did the biblical writers understand the identity and function of a priest? The New Testament referred primarily to the levitical priesthood, which had a unique closeness with Yahweh. True priests had a divine access to God in which they knew and proclaimed the mind of God.

However, they had a double task to perform as intercessors or mediators in the totality of their task as priests. They first petitioned Yahweh as the answer to their listeners' needs.

Thus the priest had a prophetic duty as well as an intercessory one. The mediation made with his access to God

⁴⁷ Edward P. Echlin, The Priest as Preacher, Past and Future (Notre Dame: Fides Publishers, 1973), 79-80.

also meant that he was responsible to communicate God's message back to those he represented. The priest intervened for helpless men and women. Likewise, he returned with the message of hope that atonement for their sins had been made.

Paul underscored the dual nature of the priest and linked it to proclaiming the gospel in Rom. 15:15-16. He writes, "The grace God gave me to be a minister of Jesus Christ to the gentiles with the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God..."(NIV). Here, Paul plainly linked the position of preacher with that of priest. Moreover, he did not understand his priestly role as one of merely ceremonial duties, but of proclaiming the gospel.

Our preaching does fulfill part of our priestly function as Christian ministers. Perhaps we may say that there is something sacramental involved within our preaching. If this is the case, then we should look upon our weekly preaching as joining men and women to God through His word.

Dual nature of priestly preaching. What becomes obvious is that the minister who understands this call also understands its dual nature. The preacher is to be touched by the weaknesses and needs of his listeners and then offer the message of hope Yahweh desires His/Her people to hear.

If we consider the example of our High Priest in Christ, we may understand more of our own task. There is a responsibility to intercessory prayer for the flock which God entrusted to us. Jesus taught us the need of intercessory

prayer by example (John 17). In 1 John 2:1, we read that Jesus intercedes for us in the presence of the Father (see also Romans 8:34). We should then enter the holy place of our prayer closet, bringing the needs of those to whom we minister.

How do we make certain our preaching remains faithful to the second nature of the priest, as Paul described it in Romans? Hebrews 4:15 describes Jesus as High Priest who is "touched by our infirmities." Jesus entered into human weakness; thus, He can sympathize with us.

The words "touched by our infirmities" literally mean that Jesus, as High Priest, shares the same feeling of our delicate weakness and selfish-ness. Just as Jesus cried for those aching at Lazarus' tomb (John 11:33-35), our High Priest weeps with us today in our sorrow as well.

Bringing home the point of sympathy, Jesus told a parable concerning an unsympathetic priest in Luke 10:25-37. It was a Samaritan who showed mercy on a man who had fallen into a troubled situation. A priest who came that way saw the helpless victim, but traveled to the other side of the road to avoid dealing with the man's problems. Jesus taught us to do as the Samaritan, who had mercy upon the beaten traveler, not as the unsympathetic priest.

As ministers, we may attempt to walk to the other side of the road without sympathy toward those with pain and suffering in their lives. Since we may not feel we have

adequate answers, we may ignore their problem and hope that time wears away the loneliness of solitary weeping. We may even escape the harsh reality of people around us by launching huge efforts to help the needy thousands of miles away.

However, if a minister is not touched by the heart of his own congregation, he can neither intercede for them nor find the message of the father to bring the much-needed hope.

A sermon is only half of a sermon if it is only an exposition of a selected text, a running commentary, or the product of the preacher's concerns. Moreover, it probably will not minister to specific needs of a congregation.

Granted, the text is the sermon and the preacher is the one who must prepare the manuscript. Yet the way we approach and deliver the text is something that must be molded by sensing the needs of the people. In other words, preachers cannot preach pertinent messages if they are unaware of the feelings and situations of their parishioners.

A Method for priestly preaching. A three-level hermeneutic design is a helpful method for priestly preaching. The three levels are as follows:

1. Exegesis: Using the available tools to determine what the biblical text meant in its context.⁴⁸

2. Exposition: Fitting the text into the entire theological framework of Scripture to determine the eternal

⁴⁸ Elliott E. Johnson, Expository Hermeneutics: An Introduction (Grand Rapids: Academic Books, 1990), 142-44.

truth communicated in the text.⁴⁹

3. Application: Understanding the needs of the listeners to rightly determine the meaning of the text for a particular contemporary situation.⁵⁰

The biblical text undergoes these three levels during the time of preparation and not necessarily delivery. The third level of application is where the preacher is to be touched by the listeners' fears and concerns.

A general application is not enough in a truly effective sermon. Relevant sermons will be tailored specifically to the needs and situations of the pastor's listeners. This is not license to meddle in personal affairs. Rather, this is asking the simple, but necessary question, "What does the text say to us?" A sermon which is developed through the three levels and can answer this question will be one which will minister to the needs of the people.

A priestly sermon does not have an exalted speaker talking down to the recipients of his message. This sermon has a speaker sensitive to the perspective of the congregation, one who attempts to understand life alongside his listeners. In fact, to properly understand the nature of preaching is to view the preacher in solidarity with the audience and personally listening to the message.

We must be saturated in scripture in order to preach a

⁴⁹ Johnson, 111-12.

⁵⁰ Johnson, 214.

biblical sermon. In the same way, we must be immersed in the lives of those to whom we hope to minister relevantly.

The message of Scripture does not change, but we can make a specific application to the daily lives of our congregations. When we fellowship with our people, see where they work, visit where they live, eat at their tables, we begin to understand their concerns and fears. These opportunities to get to know the congregation are never wasted time or energy.

The preacher with effective weekly preaching is one who spends as much time attempting to understand his listeners as sitting in the study attempting to understand the text.

Ultimately, our preaching reflects the message God has for our individual churches and lives. The impact of that message requires one who understands the perspective of those hearing it.

As preachers, we fulfill our priestly role in interceding for our parishioners in prayer, then bringing back the message of hope the Father desires them to know. This is preaching as mediation, being touched by their infirmities; this is the priestly function of preaching.

CHAPTER 4

How to Prepare an Expository Preaching

The purpose of this chapter is to define a theory of expository preaching and examine the practice of it.

Definition of Expository Preaching

What Expository Preaching is Not

Generally speaking, Biblical preaching has often been identified with expository preaching, especially in contrast to topical preaching. Unfortunately, some homileticians brought confusion into the terminology when they contrasted the category of "expository preaching" not only with the category of "topical preaching" but also with that of "textual preaching." With that complication, the term expository preaching took on so many misleading connotations as to make it useless. For example, in contrast to textual preaching, it has been claimed that expository preaching "grows out of a Bible passage longer than two or three verses," that "both the main points and the subpoints of the sermon are derived from the text"; that it is "verse-by-verse explanation of a chosen passage," or "consecutive interpretation and practical enforcement of a book in the sacred canon."¹ Therefore, let us consider what expository preaching is not.

Religious discourse that has no connection with the

¹ Andrew W. Blackwood, The Preparation of Sermons (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1948), 69.

Biblical text is not expository preaching. Particularly, we can say that, in topical preaching, the Bible is the jumping board preaching. One uses the jumping board for swimming. However, the jumping board cannot be used for swimming after one has jumped into the pool. Just like this, one uses the Bible passage(s) in order to start his/her preaching but he/she never uses the Bible passage after his/her preaching has started.

The giving of a short word(s) from various verses in a text along with running commentary is not expository preaching. Let us examine the following preaching outline.

Sermon Title: "Righteousness of God"

Scriptural Text: Romans 3:21-26.

- (1). "Now" (v. 21)
- (2). "Apart from law" (v. 21)
- (3). "Righteousness of God" (v. 22)
- (4). "There is no distinction" (v. 22)
- (5). "All have sinned" (v. 23)
- (6). "Grace" (v. 24)
- (7). "Expiation by his blood" (v. 25)
- (8). "Divine forbearance" (v. 25)
- (9). "Justification" (v. 26)

In the above outline, these are all correct words that are very important in this text, but each division does not have any connection with the title, "Righteousness of God" together with each division. Furthermore, there is no core idea in this sermon. The exegesis is not expository preaching. Exegesis is "a systematic plan for coming to understand a biblical text."² In other words, exegesis is to try to find

² John H. Hays and Carl R. Holladay, Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982), 23-28.

the original meaning for the first readers and intentional meaning of a writer of a passage(s)³ by the historical-critical method. Therefore, the basic questions for exegesis are: (1) Who was the author of the text? (2) Where was the text written? (3) When was the text written? (4) What was the situation for which the text was written? (5) Why (for what purpose) was the text written?⁴ However, exegesis does not deal with the meaning for today's reader which means application. Therefore, exegesis is a process to prepare for preaching, not preaching itself.

Definition of Expository Preaching

Expository preaching is "Bible-centered" preaching. That is, it is handling the text "in such a way that its real and essential meaning as it existed in the mind of the particular Biblical writer and as it exists in the light of the overall context of Scripture is made plain and applied to the present-day needs of hearers."⁵ Thus one might say that expository preaching is preaching biblically. But expository preaching is more than a mere synonym for biblical preaching; it describes what is involved in biblical preaching, namely, the exposition of a biblical passage(s). John Stott elucidates

³ Walter C. Kaiser, Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching and Teaching (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981), 43-47.

⁴ Ronald J. Allen, Contemporary Biblical Interpretation for Preaching (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1984), 36.

⁵ Merrill F. Unger, Principles of Expository Preaching (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1955), 33.

this point as follows:

Whether it (text) is long or short, our responsibility as expositors is to open it up in such a way that it speaks its message clearly, plainly, accurately, relevantly, without addition, subtraction or falsification. In expository preaching, the biblical text is neither a conventional introduction to a sermon on a largely different theme, nor a convenient peg on which to hang a ragbag of miscellaneous thought, but a master which dictates and controls what is said.⁶

According to John A. Broadus, in expository preaching, the outline of the sermon is the exploration of the outline that comes from the text itself. In other words, expository preaching has the whole thought and the fundamental content of preaching in the text.⁷

Walter L. Liefeld indicates five factors for expository preaching: (1) one basic text, (2) hermeneutical integrity, (3) cohesion, (4) movement and direction, and (5) application.⁸

James Braga thinks that expository preaching interprets the long text in relation to one subject. He asserts that most sources must come from the text.⁹

The expository preaching is an effort to explain,

⁶ John R. W. Stott, Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 126.

⁷ John A. Broadus, On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, 4th ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), 58-69.

⁸ Walter L. Liefeld, New Testament Exposition: From Text to Sermon (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 6-7.

⁹ James Braga, How to Prepare Bible Messages, Rev. ed. (Portland: Multnomah Press, 1981), 53.

illustrate and apply the Bible passage(s) to life. Its purpose is to help the hearers hear in the sacred writings, which means the Bible, the true interpretation of life.

Necessity of Expository Preaching

Question of Preachers' Authority

The necessity of expository preaching shows itself most clearly when the question of authority is raised. By whose authority do preachers preach? Whose word do they bring today? If preachers preach their own words, the congregation may disregard the sermon as just another person's opinion. If contemporary preachers preach with authority, however, the congregation must respond to them as an authoritative message. The only proper authority for preachings is divine authority --the authority of God's heralds, God's ambassadors, or God's agents. Heralds and ambassadors, we have seen, do not speak their own word but that of their sender. Today's preachers, similarly, if they wish to speak with divine authority, must speak not their own word but their Sender's, God.¹⁰

Accordingly, if preachers wish to preach with divine authority, they must proclaim the message of the inspired Scripture, for the Scriptures alone are the Word of God written; the Scriptures alone have divine authority. If preachers wish to preach with divine authority, they must

¹⁰ Donald G. Miller, Fire in Thy Mouth (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1954), 109. "To be the agent of God's authority is to be bear witness to what God has done for men in Christ, as this is recorded in the Bible."

submit themselves, their thoughts and opinions, to the Bible and echo the Word of God. Preachers are to be ministers of the Word. Thus preaching with authority is synonymous with true expository preaching. "Preaching which severs itself... from the Bible can have little or no valid authority over men's minds or hearts," asserts Miller, "for it is an irreverent assumption of authority which no living man may rightly claim.... The only right we have to preach Christ as he makes himself known through the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament."¹¹

The Bible as the Source of Preaching

Not only does the Bible provide divine authority for preaching, it is also the only normative source for contemporary preaching. Donald Miller asks,

Why does the Bible remain unique and authoritative for preaching? Why is the canon a closed and clear line of demarcation drawn between the history of redemption in the Bible and church history? The answer to this is to be seen in the light of the fact that revelation lies primarily in the unfolding drama of redemptive history, rather than in a set of religious ideas. Since the Bible is the record of the redemptive history, it remains permanently normative.¹²

This answer is valid as far as it goes, but there is more to the uniqueness of the Bible than simply being the record of the redemptive history. The Bible is unique and indispensable for preaching because it provides the definitive

¹¹ Miller, 112.

¹² Miller, 55.

interpretation of God's action in history; the Bible is the source for contemporary preaching because it alone provides the normative proclamation of God's acts of redemption and the response God requires. The Bible itself, therefore, can be seen as preaching: authoritative proclamation for future generations of God's good news of salvation. As such, the Bible is the only normative source for today's preaching.

From the beginning, the church recognized the Bible as the source for preaching (e.g. Luke 4:16-17; the sermon in Acts; 1 Tim. 4:13). Using the Bible as the source for preaching undoubtedly places a heavy responsibility on preachers, for they must seek to do justice to the Scripture as well as to the contemporary situation in which the Word must be spoken. Paul reminded Timothy of this responsibility in a word that is equally applicable to contemporary preachers: "Do your best not to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15).

Expository Preaching and the Bible

The outstanding characteristic of expository preaching is that it uses the Bible as the source for its preaching; it seeks to give an exposition of a biblical passage. By contrast, nonbiblical topical preaching presents neither text nor exposition. Although it is possible to preach topical sermons that are biblical, in actual practice they often turn out to be flights of fancy which have little or nothing to do with biblical thought. Moreover, it is extremely difficult

for the congregation to test topical preaching by the criterion of the Bible. But an expository sermon purposely seeks to set forth a biblical message on the basis of biblical text; "The expositor is only to provide mouth and lips for the passage itself so that the Word may advance."¹³

At heart, expository preaching is not just a method but a commitment, a view of the essence of preaching, a homiletical approach to preach the Scriptures. This underlying commitment, in turn, is bound to reveal itself in the method in which preachers tie themselves to the Scriptures and, as heralds of Christ, seek to proclaim only that which the Scriptures proclaim.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Expository Preaching

Advantages of Expository Preaching

Expository preaching has many advantages over topical preaching. John Stott lists four major benefits: (1) It sets limits, that is, "It restricts us to the Scriptural text" and does not allow us to invent our own message. (2) It demands integrity, that is, it confronts the preacher with the question, "What did the original author intend his words to mean?" (3) It identifies the pitfalls to be avoided. Stott mentions two main pitfalls: forgetfulness and disloyalty. "The forgetful expositor loses sight of his/her text by going off on a tangent and following his/her own fancy. The

¹³ Gustaf Wingren, The Living Word: A Theological Study of Preaching and the Church, trans. V. C. Pogue (London: SCM Press, 1960), 201.

disloyal expositor appears to remain with his/her text, but strains and stretches it into something quite different from its original and natural meaning." (4) It gives us confidence to preach, for we are not expounding our own fallible views but the Word of God.¹⁴ All of these benefits are advantages for the preacher.

In the light of our discussion, we can also enumerate specific benefits of expository preaching for the church. First, expository preaching causes the Scriptures to be heard in church, thus enabling the members to gain an understanding of the Scripture. Second, more so than topical preaching, expository preaching gives the hearer a measure of assurance that they are hearing the Word of God. Finally, expository preaching aids the critical function of the church since it provides the hearer with textual limits for testing the spoken word against the written Word; thus the hearer can decide more responsibly whether a message deserves acceptance.

Disadvantages of Expository Preaching

Expository preaching has many advantages, but there are a few disadvantages. First, a poor exposition in part may lead to the idea that such a sermon is dry and uninteresting. In order to overcome this shortcoming, the preacher must spend much time in Bible study. However, the making of expository preaching is difficult. Second, some people have antipathy toward the expository sermon because they misunderstood what

¹⁴ Stott, 126-33.

an expository sermon really is due to previous negative experiences. Thus it is not a running, skittering commentary, suited to a Sunday-school class. Neither is it a prayer-meeting style of commentary, full of pious homily, and with a certain amount of exegesis of a loose type. Still further, it is not an exhaustive and exhausting digest of all the commentaries to which one has access. Finally, expository preaching is difficult to prepare and deliver. Successful work in exposition requires a keen exegetical or analytical mind, with ability to get into the spirit of the writer and express with conviction and enthusiasm, the applications of the text. This combination of head, heart, intellect, and emotion is not a common one.

Steps to Expository Preaching

The following to explains and illustrates the process of preparing expository preaching by applying principles to the various steps that are used in all kinds of preaching.

Selecting the Text

Generally speaking, the first thing for preaching is an idea. Ilion T. Jones asserts, "The exact point where a sermon originates is where the idea first occurs."¹⁵ In topical preaching, for example, a text is used simply to introduce or suggest the subject. With the expository preaching, however, it is different; a preacher begins to work out the development of his/her sermon by explaining and applying the text or

¹⁵ See Jones, Principles and Practice of Preaching, 69.

portion of Scripture he/she has selected. The starting-point of expository preaching must be getting the idea from the Scripture.

The material that is used in the development of the discourse must be based upon the passage (passages) selected; it is sometimes necessary and generally desirable to use more than three verses. The expository preacher deals with the Scripture in larger chunks than does the textual preacher. But it may be asked, does the expository method always require several verses of Scripture for the building of a sermon? No. The passage selected for expository preaching may be only one or two verses, or may include several, even a chapter, or possibly a whole book. The only thing that determines the scope is that the sermon must be a unit of thought and an orderly and complete working out of some proposition which gives the point on which the development is concentrated.

According to Ilion T. Jones, the primary reasons for using the text are: (1) "The Bible is the original source of our knowledge. Our Christian faith and practice, together with the Christian church, are based upon the original witness in the changeless historical documents."¹⁶ (2) "The Bible offers a wide range of moral, religious, and social truths."¹⁷ So, the Bible is not only the authoritative source of Christianity itself, but also the authoritative source of all Christian

¹⁶ Jones, 74.

¹⁷ Jones, 75.

instruction and preaching. By basing a sermon on Scripture, the preacher can say, "What I have to say is not my opinion but the revealed truth of God."¹⁸

For expository preaching, a preacher must try to find the dominant idea, or "central idea."¹⁹ For example, the Book of Philemon might be used to illustrate a sermon based on a whole book. It sets forth Paul's method of dealing with slavery, and is capable of a very practical application. Philemon, apparently a wealthy man, living in Colossae, had a slave named Onesimus. This slave ran away from his master and fled to Rome. While in Rome, he was led to Christ by Paul, and attached himself as a servant to the one who had thus brought him from darkness to light. Onesimus then revealed to Paul his past, and confessed that he had run away from Philemon. Paul is thus faced with the dilemma of deciding between loyalty to his friend, Philemon, and the principle of slavery. About that time, Tychicus was leaving for Colossae, and so Paul advised Onesimus to return with him and surrender his liberty, and gave him a letter of introduction to his old master, which is our Book of Philemon. In this book, what is the central idea or big idea? It is brotherhood.

Finding the Subject

One may be dealing with 1 Peter 3:1-6, for example, which

¹⁸ Jones, 76.

¹⁹ William N. Brigance, Speech: Its Techniques and Disciplines in a Free Society (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1952), 35.

includes quite a variety of subjects: (1) wives' deeds, (2) wives' faith, (3) wives' beauty, and (4) wives' docilities. But the preacher needs to feel no obligation to discuss every one of these subjects. From this text, one can make a sermon title like "Wives' Obedience from an Inner Beauty." Generally speaking, Scripture has many thoughts, but it is written as a unit of thought.

After the text and its main idea for the sermon come together, it is time to begin thinking of a subject. Some writers name the heading of a preaching as the subject, while others call it the topic, or the title. There are technical distinctions which apply to these three terms. Subject is the word for the broad, general field to be discussed. Topic indicates more specifically the particular phase to be discussed. Title is a label intended primarily to arouse curiosity and attract attention. All of these are to be distinguished from the theme or thesis or proposition, as it is variously called by different writers. The theme is "the gist of the sermon in one sentence."²⁰ Here is an example for a preacher: (1) Subject-"Scapegoat"; (2) Topic-"The Modern Practice of Using Scapegoat"; (3) Thesis-"You cannot get rid of your sins by making someone or something else a scapegoat for them"; (4) Title-"Passing the Buck."

The ideal way to state a subject is to make it the actual theme or thesis of the sermon, and to make it co-extensive

²⁰ Jones, 84.

with the text. A properly stated theme adequately sets forth the specific truth in the text that the sermon proposes to discuss. In order for a theme to be used as the actual subject of the sermon, it should be clearly formulated before the preparation of the sermon begins. It should appear for the hearers in some form in the introduction, and should guide the structural development of the sermon. However, a subject is too broad and definitely needs to be limited to a theme for the purpose of discussion.

The purposes of a subject are mainly three: (1) to define and limit the discussion for the preacher, (2) to focus the attention of the hearer, and (3) to keep both the preacher and the hearer on the track. By some, the subject is spoken of as a magnet to keep one on the track, and by others as the focus, the axis, or the orbit of the sermon.

Biblical Interpretation

Unfortunately, the Bible has been grievously misinterpreted and misused by some Christian preachers in every generation. The Scripture is adjusted to the meaning of the sermon, instead of the sermon being adjusted to the meaning of the Scripture. The mere existence of a word in the Bible does not justify its extraction from a sentence and its use for any and every purpose desired by a preacher, irrespective of what it meant in the original sentence. Therefore, without the Biblical interpretation, a preacher cannot preach a sermon. The preacher must use exegesis

instead of eisegesis to interpret a passage. Eisegesis is reading one's own idea into (eis) a passage, whereas exegesis is bringing out (ex) the real meaning of the passage. Exegesis is "a systematic plan for coming to understand a biblical text."²¹

According to Thomas G. Long, exegetical steps are:

- I. Getting the text in view
 - A. Select the text
 - B. Reconsider where the text begins and ends
 - C. Establish a reliable translation of the text
- II. Getting introduced to the text
 - D. Read the text for basic understanding
 - E. Place the text in its larger context
- III. Attending to the text
 - F. Listen attentively to the text
- IV. Testing what is heard in the text
 - G. Explore the text historically
 - H. Explore the literary character of the text
 - I. Explore the text theologically
 - J. Check the text in the commentaries
- V. Moving toward the sermon
- VI. State the claim of the text upon the hearers (including the preacher)²²

Ronald J. Allen discusses exegetical methods for preaching. His methods are:

- 1. The historical background: how to get the feel of the world in which the text came to life and to which it speaks.
- 2. Word studies: how to infuse flesh-and-blood meaning into ancient biblical text.

²¹ Thomas G. Long, The Witness of Preaching (Louisville: Westminster/ John Knox Press, 1989), 60.

²² Long, 61.

3. Redaction criticism: ways in which the meaning of an individual text can shed light on the whole work.

4. Structuralism: how this discipline can enlarge understanding as it moves both preacher and hearer from one thought to another.

5. Sociological exegesis: its significance in relating the sermon to different social perspectives.

6. Liberation theology: how it can help preachers to focus on previously unnoticed dimensions of the biblical text.

7. Interpreting a biblical text as a work of art: the relationship between religion and art.

8. Canonical criticism: its contemporary significance.

9. Hermeneutics: how to make the transition from ancient to contemporary meaning.²³

The goal of exegesis is the understanding of the text. Expository preaching is based upon the understanding of the text. In brief, exegesis draws out the hidden meaning of the text. Therefore, we can ask the preacher two questions: (1) What is the text saying? (2) What is the text doing?²⁴ David R. Breed asserts, "The expository sermon is the product of exegesis, but it is in no sense its exhibition. It is not a running commentary upon some passage of Scripture in which its separate parts are taken up seriatim and explained, but, as

²³ Allen, 29-137.

²⁴ Craddock, 122.

its name implies, it is a piece of rhetoric: a sermon."²⁵

Purpose of Preaching

Judging from their sermons, some preachers seem to be preaching without any clear purpose or goal. Preaching is not for mountains and streams, but humans who gather at a specific place for a specific purpose. The function of expository preaching is to show how the Scripture relates to human life. All sermons ought to be workable. If preaching is to be consequential it must be directed to earthly inhabitants in definite human situations, with specific needs. Preaching is not dogmatic monologue, but cooperative dialogue. This means it ought to include humans: what they are thinking, the questions they are asking, and the problems they are facing. In this point of view, every sermon ought to get down to reality, to where people live. That should be the one guiding purpose of expository preaching.

Main Divisions of a Sermon

In discussing the main divisions of a sermon, we are concentrating upon what is a very important part of a sermon. All parts are important, because one part of the figure must bring to mind the others. If one were preaching about "The Trial of Jesus" from Matt. 27:11-31, he/she might use, for his/her main divisions, the prisoner, the accusers, the judge, the verdict. Here, each division relates to the others.

²⁵ David R. Breed, Preparing to Preach (New York: Dodd Mead, 1911), 387.

However, divisions are for the purpose of making it easy to remember what was said. If, for example, one is preaching on "The Story of a Rich Man," as given in Luke 12:13-30, he/she might discuss the subject under three heads; namely, his fortune, his folly, his fate. Here, the progressiveness and the completeness of the divisions would make it easy to recall the whole of the discourse.

The simplest type of divisions, for expository sermons, is that which groups together a number of successive verses, and then brings them together under one head. For example, one can preach on "The Greatest Thing in the World" from 1 Cor. 13:1-13. His/her first division is based on verses 1-3, and is called "love contrasted"; the second part is on verses 4-6, and is given as "love analyzed"; the third is taken up with the remainder of the chapter, verses 7-13, and is called "love defended as the supreme gift." Here, each part of the subject is explained, illustrated and applied in the order in which it occurs in the passage. While the whole chapter is organized and expressed, it is done in such a way as to give a convenient and helpful organization of the material involved. In brief, the purpose of the first method is to aid the audience in remembering the visions; thus, they will be able to recall both the material used and also the development of the discourse.

The second method is that of taking a text or verse of Scripture and giving an exposition of the separate words or

phrases. In this way, Maclaren gives the sermon the title of "The Lake and the River" from John 3:16. His divisions are: (1) The great lake--God's love. (2) The river--He gave his only Son. (3) The pitcher--that whoever believes. (4) The draught--eternal life.²⁶ Here four divisions are first discussed and then bound together by a metaphor, which is valuable because it helps us to see the relationship of what otherwise might be thought of as separate ideas.

The third method is to read over the Scripture and discover, if possible, related ideas under which material can be classified. This method has to be employed when the plan suggested above cannot be applied. For example, one can take for a theme "The Conversion of Lydia" from Acts 16:13-15. It may have three headings: (1) What Paul did. (2) What Lydia did. (3) What the Lord did.

In arranging the divisions for an expository sermon, it is not necessary to include a discussion of all the Scripture. However, in an expository sermon, the Scripture must be well studied before the main divisions can be stated.

From a review of these divisions it will be seen that the first thing to do is thoroughly to read over the Scripture which is selected. The next thing is to grasp the trend of the discussion, or the central thought in the narrative. Having done this, it is then necessary to get the particular aspect of the subject or theme that is regarded as the most

²⁶ Knott, 66.

interesting and helpful for any congregation. Next, the preacher must build the sermon around this point or proposition, using the Scriptures to interpret life. The Bible deals with the realities of life and with the fundamental laws of the spiritual world. An expository preacher must show his/her audience that the questions of the human soul have their counterpart and answers in the Word of God.

Conclusion

The purpose of a conclusion is to apply the proposition. One cannot devote too much thought to this part of the sermon. A proper conclusion is very important for the preacher. There are various methods that can be used to make a conclusion. There is, first of all, the plan of recapitulation, in which the preacher restates his/her main heading or makes clear the demonstration of the proposition. Ilion T. Jones emphasizes,

The word "resume" is to be preferred to either the word "summary" or the word "recapitulation," because it means not a formal summary, but a brief restatement of the main points in different forms and in a freer way. This resume may constitute a major portion of the conclusion. But it should be more than a mere academic summary: it should be an appeal both to the mind and to the emotions, and should look forward, as well as backward.²⁷ Above all, it should not be laborious and tedious.

Most sermons, in the conclusion, reach a measure of feeling. This is necessary to move people to a decision, and every expository sermon is or should be preached with a view

²⁷ Jones, 164.

to persuasion, so the conclusion will usually be planned to maintain or to develop emotional character. The most successful ways of sustaining emotion are the use of illustration or quotations. This may be taken from the Scriptures, from one of the poets, or may be a few lines from a hymn. Hymns give expression to religious sentiment and feeling.

The third method is to appeal. It means persuasion of the congregation to accept the truth and do something about it. For example, if one preached on "Two Ways" from Matt. 7:13-14, the preacher can say, "I want you to chose the narrow way." The preacher should talk directly to each person such as "I beseech you," "I wish I could persuade you," "I invite you," "I challenge you," and "I appeal to you."²⁸

The last method is to question. If one preached on the "Good Samaritan," he/she may ask a question: "Who is a Good Samaritan?"

From a discussion of these general principles of an appropriate conclusion, it will be seen that it is the same for expository sermons as for any other sermon. The character of the conclusion is not determined by the type of sermon, whether expository, topical, or textual. The purpose of all sermons is the same--to persuade, to bring conviction, to lead to action. The conclusion must be focused on this purpose of a sermon.

²⁸ Jones, 165.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

The Korean church has recorded a rapid rate of growth within this century, and it has drawn a great deal of attention from all corners of the world. However, this rapid church growth did not extend to social transformation. Furthermore, despite such unusually rapid church growth, Christians in Korea suffer from the division of the church. One of the main reasons for this split seems to lie in the pulpit. Most of the preachers have tended to omit certain aspects of the gospel and to proclaim a half-gospel. As a result, the tension between evangelical preaching and liberating preaching has been so great, that it has truncated the churches in Korea. This project has attempted to show how a creative synthesis between personal salvation and social redemption in preaching is possible through expository preaching. In concluding this project, the following are some recommendations and a proposal for the future direction in the Korean church.

Responsibility to Preach Holistically

If ministry is to fulfill God's holistic vision for the whole person in the world, preaching should use a holistic approach. Genuine preaching deals with both the divine questions and human questions. It ought to proclaim what God wills, on the one hand, and meet human needs, on the other.

Preaching has thus put its emphasis both on the vertical relationship between God and a human, and the horizontal relationship between a human and his/her society. Today, the challenge to preachers, if they are to be faithful to their Lord, is greater than ever. The responsibility of the preacher is to fulfill God's holistic vision for whole persons. Those whom he/she addresses are not only the poor and the oppressed, but also the rich and the oppressors.

Priority of Preaching

Preaching should be primarily concerned with personal salvation and then social redemption. But personal salvation must be connected with social redemption in terms of spiritual growth. In other words, the conversion of the individual ought to be extended to social transformation at the collective level. The spiritual growth of a church depends on the ability of its preacher to see the reality in the whole. Through the harmonious combination of personal salvation and social redemption in preaching, it is possible to reduce tension between the churches in Korea so as to fulfill the Word of God in word and deed.

Cooperation Between the Preacher and the Congregation

It is necessary to establish a cooperative relationship between the pulpit and the pew, in order to make preaching more vital and practical. The relationship does not only mean a two-sided communication in preaching, but a cooperation for the realization of the Word of God in the personal lives of

the congregation and in their society, as well. In this respect, one of the preacher's responsibilities is to encourage his/her people to face the realities of life. He/she should provide his/her people with bifocals to see reality not in parts, but as a whole. On the other hand, the congregation has to contribute to and receive strength from their preacher. Moreover, they are responsible for their preacher being an agent of God, both for the conversion of individuals and for social transformation. To establish this cooperative relationship, a preacher has to endeavor to create a respected and loving pastoral relationship with his/her congregation. He/she ought to be open and fair to the people's criticism in order to produce a cooperative relationship. People will usually listen to one who acknowledges and shows understanding of their feelings. This will create an atmosphere of openness and cooperation, so that preacher and congregation will unite to fulfill God's holistic vision in the world.

It is recommended that a preacher use small groups, as Clyde Reid suggests,¹ for the study and discussion of preaching, so that he/she may get support from them. One of the serious problems with most preaching is that it is a monologue. People feel as if they are being preached at rather than to. This may be a barrier to a cooperative relationship. In this connection, using small groups for

¹ See Reid, 108-10.

support through study and discussion is recommended because it will establish a cooperative relationship between the preacher and the congregation.

Preaching at Both the Personal and Collective Level

Expository preaching touches people first at the personal level, so that they experience the reality of what is being proclaimed. Real preaching occurs in response to the preacher's reference to something that is vital in the life experience of the congregation. There is an emotional response as well as an intellectual response in which people are mentally and emotionally touched to form a clearer understanding of what is being preached and of who they are.

However, expository preaching must go deeper than just being heard. It inspires people to move toward the realization of what is preached. Faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead! When Expository preaching speaks about faith's consistent work, it understands the word as individual work as well as public action. People are able to respond and act, because they are moved by something that is vital in their lives and by something with which they identify.

Preaching at the personal and collective levels means touching people to commit themselves for personal growth as well as for social transformation. In this respect, expository preaching is recommended because it makes the people hear, change and act.

The Scriptures and Social Information for Preaching

Despite Bible-centered conservatism, some pastors are concerned with social reality. This seems to show a promising aspect for the future direction of preaching in the Korean church. Most conservative preachers have tended to take the Bible as the only ground for preaching, and have disregarded the social reality in the socio-political context. On the other hand, the liberal preachers have tended to put an emphasis on social reality alone, and relegate the Bible to the margin of things. Both of them should pay attention to the fact that the authority of real preaching is derived from both the Scripture and social reality.

In this regard, expository preaching attempts to make the connection between the Bible and social reality closer and clearer. This will give the congregation a sense of confidence and relevance. Moreover, it will bring members of the congregation to a belief that leads to action. For this reason, expository preaching is necessary because it demands preachers use many themes in the Scripture to show the congregation what God wants to say. It also pushes preachers to preach a theology of hope, involvement, and liberation which will show the way God wants people to act.

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